

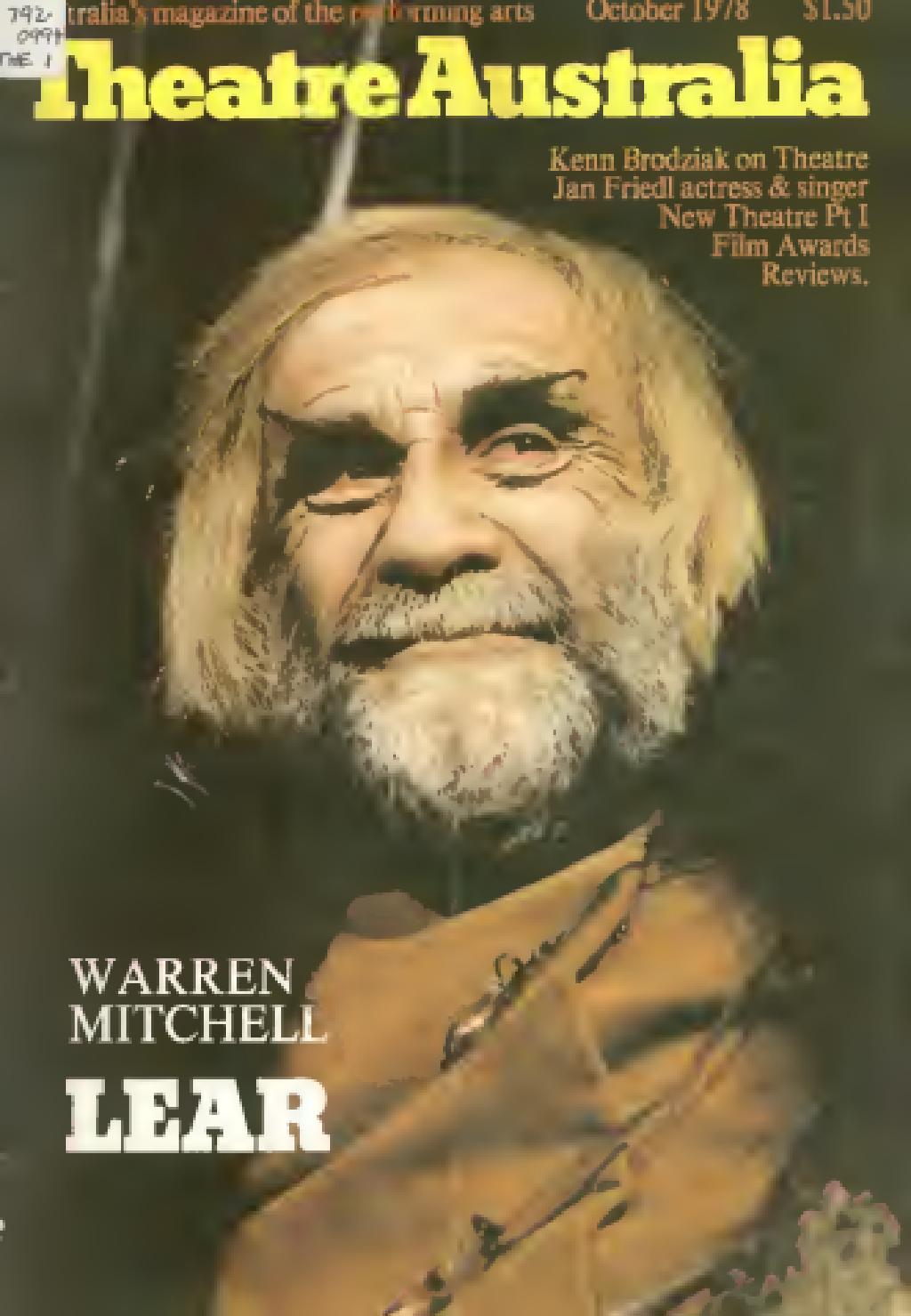
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October 1978

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Theatre Australia

Kenn Brodziak on Theatre
Jan Friedl actress & singer
New Theatre Pt I
Film Awards
Reviews.



WARREN
MITCHELL

LEAR

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Theatre

October 1978
Volume 3 No. 3

Australia

Departments	2	Comment
1	3	Queens and Queens
2	4	Letters
3	5	Whispers, Rumours and Facts
4	6	171
5	7	Classical Theatre, Opera, Dance
6	8	<i>See Frost — a passion for work with others — Bruce Williams</i>
7	9	<i>The NIDA Congress — Simon Heath</i>
8	10	<i>The Continuing Saga of Death Night — Veronika Kelly</i>
9	11	<i>Absurdly Comedicary — Tony Baker</i>
10	12	<i>One-Finger Tease — Keri Hobson</i>
Features	13	<i>Karen Brasch, interviewed by Helen Page</i>
11	14	<i>New Theatre Movement — Paul J. Morris Brand</i>
12	15	<i>Kristina Pashkova, Designer in Exile — Philippa Baskett</i>
13	16	<i>The State Theatre and its Alternatives — Colin Williams</i>
International	17	<i>The last year's Fare Part — Stephan Gaudioso reports</i>
Playscript	18	<i>Frontline Critic — Art H. Dorothy Hayes</i>
Dance	19	<i>Dance Company — headed to us like a wild cat — William Shakespeare</i>
20	21	<i>A Profile of Ann Jones — Rita Ryan</i>
Opera	22	<i>Rehearsed Wagner — David Copley</i>
Theatre Reviews	23	VIC
	24	<i>Under Milk Wood — Raymond Buntley</i>
		<i>Adventures in Opera — David Copley</i>
		<i>The Food 'Das Hotel' — V I Richards</i>
		<i>Fonda — Jack Hildyard</i>
	25	NSW
	26	<i>Debut — Robert Page</i>
		<i>The Romantics — Doug Cowan</i>
		<i>Lamb of God — Anthony Buckley</i>
		<i>Almanacophilia — Roger Pulson</i>
		<i>The Rocky Horror Show — Andrew Whittle</i>
		<i>Letters (Reviews & Essays) — Anthony Buckley</i>
		<i>The Knack — Lucy Wagner</i>
		<i>Fonda — Roger Pulson</i>
	27	QLD
	28	<i>Fables from the Vienna Woods — Peter Baskett</i>
		<i>Chamberlain — Veronika Kelly</i>
		<i>Just Between Ourselves — Richard Petheringham</i>
		<i>Big Toys — Don Beldham</i>
	29	SA
	30	<i>A Manual of French Mystery — Tony Baker</i>
	31	WA
	32	<i>Clark Whittington and his Cat — Cliff Galton</i>
		<i>Scalp Clang — Peter Hunt</i>
		<i>Mary Stuart — Cliff Galton</i>
Film	33	<i>These who go under and their substitutes — Elizabeth Kibell</i>
34	35	<i>1977 Australian Film Awards — Terry O'Dowd</i>
35	36	<i>Mischief on Malvo — Robert Page</i>
Books	37	<i>Bitter Place from Cider — John McCullum</i>
38	39	<i>Thespian's Companion No. 4</i>



Long Live the State Theatre

The Old Tote is now dead, but the campaign goes on as the Tote season is run out under the aegis of the State. The once-bouncing band, Quantum in Queensland, is now like a hamster in the only form of activity coming from the workshops the shows now go in.

One or two of the now disgraced managers and staff have the place, their eyes closed over with the frank stain of insubordination. The shadows of the skittish staff leak on to provide continual service. The feathers and feathers.

In the board room an economic table can the only real power left in the company's affairs, the legislature. The elected officer of the now disgraced manager is now the last vest of power of the son of the producer for '78, Holding their own in Elizabeth Street, the prime and competent representatives of the State Government. Ironically the kids from NIDA, an organisation once hand in hand with the Tote and sprung from the same base. After success here in the Cultural Grants Advisory Committee, the Tote was about to return when the Tote after came up and was the obvious choice for the job as the only Government employee with the necessary theatrical background.

It's not a position to be envied, requiring tough decisions of fixing people who have grown in some cases fifteen years of their lives to the company. But already the seems to have passed the respect of those still involved in the rest of the season. She holds the purse strings, with the Government as sole proprietor, though with an eye to the idea of just what it is all going to cost to keep her with selected others.

Even Williams who heads the NSW Cultural Committee, well talk freely about what is to happen from here, but what is certain is that

police he is fairly tight lipped. There is a nine election looming and though he says, this year "it wouldn't happen more than six votes", it is for the Premier to make any announcement privately before this election is proclaimed. Clearly, though, the ministry is a state company with a statutory base line three of South Australia and Queensland.

There are lines that companies are being properly run out of the box but need to grow organically from small beginnings. And that web is fixed one that doesn't average any production until mid '79, that will look like turned back to set up such a major changeup.

The Australian Council believes there is enough money around is possible \$1.2 million for more than one company, though the second could well resolve the expansion of one already running.

Williams does believe there will be some continuity with the Tote, in particular the money and personnel, etc, perhaps, the old guard will be, of course with an entirely new board. The establishment of this board is to be the new the first priority and from there the appointment of an artistic director. He "hopes" an Australian will be chosen, believing that to be the best of who could do the job, but he will not restrict the job just to nationals.

In the gap between the end of '78 and the new theatre the State Theatre should throw open to otherwise producers — which should keep the Government and collection happy and take a load of the agency out of the present situation.

The Tote is dead. Long live the state company.



Au Revoir Paris

With the closing of *Malice in Paris* the Paris Company has been put in abeyance and only never rest again unless they get the nod in a new company.

Despite the general critical opinion that the company has been a non entity, we believe the very boldness and scale which, because of low audiences, caused us to baulk, should be applauded. The only realising should be seen as of major significance for the future. That a John Gielgud has much to do with the critical

reading the plays received more on the principle of banding and nothing to recognise and know them "giving a hand go".

Jan Maxwell notes the presence of Paris in *Quintet* and *Quintets*, and we conclude Pendle's *Open* in this issue — the publication of which is to be seen as both a tribute to the company's significant expansion and the need for a reassessment of a stage free play, which can only come about if the text is available.



Theatre Australia

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Editorial:	Brad Keeling
Management:	
Artistic:	03 363 3094
Reviews:	03 363 3095
Books:	03 363 3096
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Correspondence

MS & W:	Editor (03 363 3470)
MS:	Reviews (03 363 3479)
MS:	Book Reviews (03 363 3480)
MS & W:	John Andrew (03 363 6838)
S.A.:	Michael Mackay (03 363 2304)

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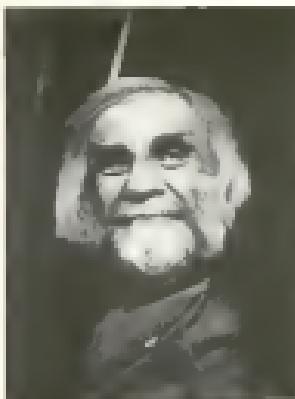
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QUOTE & QUERIES



Warren Mitchell as Lear
Photo: Peter Hollensen

OPTING FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE

WARREN MITCHELL

"It was just out of those mad things I decided to try and it seems to have come off!"

Of all the comment that I've developed in my life — and there are many — acting is the one that will speak most of all, and next to saying a few good words. That's why I stayed with *King Lear* in *Go Forth* so long — I liked John Spink's writing excellent, and you get spiced. The next move from there seemed obviously to Shakespeare who did?

There weren't going to be *new* — I saw that Goodbody's version — the one we'd done — in the National and kind of very much. It is a truncated version, and I think unattractive and to the point. I also saw *Forest*. While who applies a cast of ten horses that the role of Lear is unplayable. I was originally asked by the QTC to play the part of Stylock. Well, I could do that standing on my head and I didn't want to do anything else. So I thought I'll go for the impossible, and then no one can criticize you for it if you fail. I think we've come quite near to succeeding.

I was told that Indian audiences enjoyed *Shakespeare* as an armed theorist, although they might sing. I'm hoping the Sydney audience will be affectionate, although they may sing with this version, and young, more interested in the drama than their tea rebate!"

WHAT WENT RIGHT ABOUT PARIS

JIM SHARMAN

"Everyone who wants to write about a work

to know what went wrong with the Paris. We produced two major new works and we're pretty pleased with the results. The only question was determining the audience who would support the high risk policy of only new works, after the returns to *Scrooge* and *Big Top*. There seemed to be no audience wanting. Clearly repeat producing new work in the future should do a cushion among more successful productions. Of the two shows one was well received critically, and one badly, but the audience figures were very much the same for both — about 150,000 a night. If they had been playing at the current venue for new work, *Harriet* (Dowdell) or *Love Sweet* they would have been complete, packed out and with repeated seasons.



I hope that the Paris box shows that a closer relationship between artists and administration can be made; it's a very good thing, not just for the artists to put their point of view, but also to realize the administration problem. And also that we will see a continuing concern with new work, even if it does have to be heavily subsidized.

There have been talks between myself, Ross and the NIDA/Tele. Seven people which may come into a season next year that incorporates the best of *Love Sweet* and *Paris*, and it won't be another of those pyrrhic battles. I will be going to recharge *Scrooge* now, and then take a break, but I hope to be involved in theatre here again towards the middle of next year.

Finally, we're pleased at the Opera House audience who pass back of the Paris Theatre. It should be made compulsory reading to those who think of performing new work or starting new companies."

THE OPERA HOUSE AFFAIR

CHARLES BUTTERFIELD

"This year the Australian Council directed its annual report into two parts, a review of this year's work and the official report about grants. Anything that's been in the papers so far has been speculation as it's not being released till 16th September. The future of *The Australian* and its administration fell off the back of a truck — and whenever Malaya got home from those

the Council's view it was to smash totally wrong.

There is a review of the Opera House and the Council does not think any of the leases or it are ideal. What *The Australian* and me and the use of the Opera Theatre made the economics of running an upstart company more than usually difficult. It only holds 1,000 people and several hundred of the seats have bad sightlines. No one has ever said, however, that it should be dismantled."

MIYAMA'S SMASH HIT

BERNIE FISH, *Theatermania* Puppet Theatre

"We're very happy with our latest touring season in Adelaide and Melbourne. We did all our children's shows during the day at the Space in the Federal Centre. They were sold out and had a very good response. In the evening we played our adult show *Miyama's Little Nipper Show*, and the reviews to that have been fantastic. *Ice Princess* from the NYSELA Congress supposed we take it to Singapore as they would never have seen anything like it, so perhaps more might be made in that direction.

We have a play in the Lane Theatre Theatre Restaurant upstairs before, but I look at it's going to run as very well. Our designer, Jenny Doreen has been down there measuring up and we should be in perfectly. Following that season we go on a three week tour with the Victorian Arts Council, two weeks around the suburbs of major Melbourne, and a week in Gippsland, with *The Golden Nugget Show*.

After that we have a lot of preparations to make for the International Puppet Festival which is being held in Hobart between the 1st and 7th of January next year, we are trying to book. We are also working on a new show for adults, following the success of *Miyama*. It's going to be a cabaret evening."

WHO NEEDS WHIPBIRDS?

JOHN REED, *Master* Southern Regional Theatre

"When the Little Theatre approached me in 1971 it was going through a bad stage, the upshot was that I found myself not only giving advice, but making an investment and helping to produce plays. I started off in an actor in England in Newfoundland and my wife Mary used to act all over England, especially London, and on Broadway. We gave it all up when we came out here to live at the land. In 1971, there were consultations with the Community Arts Officer in Sydney and it was agreed that there was room for a regional theatre to try the area using Culture as a base. It was agreed then I

(Continued on page 58)

Dear Sir,

My independent press recently has Christian Bogue's letter in your August 1978 issue which sounds older and more recently fractured letters.

Actually, this should cause me a good deal of trouble. Bogue's proposed ideal for Australian theatre can't come to pass:

"...active treated drama, genuine expression and conflict."

When you think about it, it's not a bad definition of the second world war. Are we going to have body counts now?

The MIDA auditions procedures as described in the June 1978 edition of this newspaper are what we feel at the moment to be the best procedures open to us. It could of course change next year or the year after that. After all, it is an assessments procedure and should be kept as flexible as possible.

I am however of my opinion, be it of educational or vocational orientation, that we yet devised a process of assessment perfectly satisfactory to all concerned. That does not prevent us from being aware of the problem. Certainly we have not pre-committed to a year round PAINLESS AUDITIONS HELD HERE despite the implications of your correspondence.

Mr Edmonds wrote MIDA in search of a place of Theatre Australia with dismay.

Well, that's OK. Just get up a reasonable expansion and we'll have a look up at the R.A. R.A.'s said, they're going to defend the Star's article as though it contained more than a modicum of snobbery.

Yours faithfully,

John Kelly

Peter Gammie
MIDA

Dear Sir,

Further to W P Ryan's enquiry in your August edition on behalf of the Canberra Repertory Society, I hope the following information will be of interest.

Julian Knight, a Londoner, widely respected and extremely popular actor of the 'old school' was born at Dumfries, Scotland, in 1881. His first stage appearance was at Llansadurn, Wales in 'Caledon' in 1894. Seven years later he made his London debut in 'Dandini' at the Prince of Wales' Theatre. He worked for three years at Sir Henry Irving's company, and made his first visit to Australia in 1911, appearing in 'The Sign of the Cross' etc. He was back in 1914-5, starring in 'Hello Dolly', 'Makemore', 'The Silver King', 'Monsieur Beaucaire', 'The Up-Grade', 'Diplomacy', etc., and presenting dramatic competitions at the Town.

His last visit to Australia was in 1923, when he again appeared at the Town, with some of the great drama in which he had once starred. Julian Knight died on 22nd February, 1940, at the age of 59.

New York, in 1910, but it was his work in London where he played in Wilson Barrett's company for many years, that brought him renown. His first stage in Australia, with Barrett, in 1917. During their 1920-21 tour, the and Julian Knight starred in such dramas as 'Monsieur Beaucaire', 'The Darling of the Gods', 'The Eternal City', 'If I Were King', 'Cromwell', and 'Diplomacy'. His Master-Servants 'David Garrick', 'Papillon' and 'Caliban', etc. In 1924, Max Jeffreys married a wealthy Australian公主, James Holt, Melbourne, and eventually settled from the stage in exile at Gundaroo, New South Wales. He died on 27th September 1946, aged 75.

Knight visited Australia again in 1930 playing in 'The Devil Doctor', 'Phantom of Navarre', 'The Sign of the Cross' etc. He was back in 1944-5, starring in 'Hello Dolly', 'Makemore', 'The Silver King', 'Monsieur Beaucaire', 'The Up-Grade', 'Diplomacy', etc., and presenting dramatic competitions at the Town.

His last visit to Australia was in 1953, when he again appeared at the Town, with some of the great drama in which he had once starred. Julian Knight died on 22nd February, 1960, at the age of 79.

Yours faithfully,
Frank Wm Edwards
South Yarra, Victoria.



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This festival is sponsored by the Australian Society for Education through the Arts with the support of the Theatre Board of the Australia Council, The Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board and Myer.

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TOPSPOTLIGHT

Jan Friedl — a passion for work with others.

Bruce Williams

Jan Friedl is one of those who emerged from the education mill in the 70s to find themselves part of the new new Australian drama. "Now that the talk of revolution has died down, and topical issues have been replaced by a few increasingly familiar ones, other ones are waiting for direction. There is a strong, consistent line of development in Jan Friedl's career. Her success, however, depended on it becoming harder for her, as for others, to see just where these interests might best find a home."

After Melbourne University, where she made a thesis about García Lorca and the role of the political artist, she taught for a while at the State College of Victoria. From there, the free books brought in the show about Bechtols which she and Maria Friedl, the computer, together with Book Butler are currently drawing with the aid of a grant from the Australian Council. Nevertheless, Jan has a few reservations about the system's output. She was interested about John Wilkes' recent Melbourne lectures in Berlin as the occasion, not only because they were timely for research she's doing for the Bechtols show, but because of the man's love for the theatre and his abundance of information informed by this love. A welcome contrast she thought to academics who have nothing but theory to offer. When we talked about new University courses in drama (Studies has begun), Lu Trista a steering towards think the sound at least one option. "Where are the actors coming from who wanted to know?"

As with academics, so with politics. She finds the left at odds with women's issues. That is consistent with her earlier preference for Rosa Luxemburg over Clara Zetkin, a preference for the high road of change rather than the dour, that so often turns out to be dead ends. She's sceptical, too, about the view that a political theatre begins with the liberation of the arts. "What's more, no play is worth imprisonment?" Here again she is conscious of a change from the experience that she shared in a few years ago. Her preference is for a playwright's theatre. She notes that management have begun to develop Australian drama with the style of various theatrical playwrights, making it harder for young playwrights to reach a general audience. She particularly admires the work of



Jan Friedl

Photo by Brett Boardwick

Max Reinhardt and Bert Brecht

So Jan Friedl finds herself in a position where the options are the last class ones when she begins. She hasn't opted either for the commercial theatre, despite many years with the APC, nor worked for a safe professional tenth. It might have been that she has, after all, such now established through the world as the model in the Melbourne Theatre Company's players' substantial roles. She gets her share of TV work as well. What we talked about was appearing in her second Australian play for the MTC, *Dear Between Countries* having already played the would-be musical lady in *Alfred Pennyworth*. "Why do I get to play the female?" But the MTC, for her, is a slight challenge rather than a refuge. Working with groups like the APC, she says, creates a feeling that your integrity is somehow guaranteed. As the MTC, you have to work much harder to find that — the ratio of good audience to the mass crowd. "I had a strong impression though that in look at acting in that way, as something entirely personal, was also to her. "I want to do something that comes from me," she said, but in the terms meaning of *lives*. As in our conversation she was most at ease talking about others, she wants a theatre she can wholly believe in and contribute towards, not only to an audience, but in a full consciousness that of the things the play says about Bechtols, a human passion for work with others.

The Bechtols show arose from a number of discussions among them. Jan's attraction to Jan and Maria's feeling that computers like Easter and Dostoevsky, who supported Kyn Will-

iams and not this other one. One play will focus on the playwright's last year, when he returns to East Germany. "He was less a dramatist, then, than an entrepreneurial poet with a lot on his mind." The play will work back along his earlier years to make an amongst other things Bechtols' contribution to women. Interestingly Jan thinks Bechtols has more in common with Gerty Day-like regenerated hero of *Aloud* or *Aloud* than most supporters of him suggest. In a way she thinks the show will challenge Bechtols' own view of himself, although applied to the dramatist. Book Butler will direct a cast of two for the show opens at the Arcus Theatre Melbourne in September and goes on tour to Adelaide probably in The Spring.

From *Dear Between Countries* Jan went into the new *Verdinske Operasession*. Afterwards in *Open*, playing multiple roles in *The An Immortal Father* or *Seven Deadly Arts* and *Entwined* by Martin Friedl and Jack Hildyard. I didn't pay her money to appear as the surfacing mother slowly coat and stuff where son is worried away by the windswept.

On the whole though, I like watching her researchful performances better a good singer as well that a theatre she could believe in wholly was still a long way away. The shortcomings of "concept" and "dramaturgy" theatre can't be overcome with goodish measures like this at the Victorian Open. Bechtols called of the often needed to run the theatre from a kind of division to a kind of expansion. Jan Friedl, at least, has no illusions about how hard a task that is.

The INSEA Congress — Arts in Cultural Diversity

Solrun Hoasas

The 23rd World Congress of The International Society for Education Through Art (INSEA), held in Adelaide 12-19 August, on the theme of 'Arts in Cultural Diversity', was like a mammoth marketplace with far too many rooms competing for attention. Overall there was an atmosphere of waste rather than art for a diverse program, as might have been profitably illustrated by a mix & match combination with more potential for interaction between arts educators and theoreticians.

On the surface of it the congress was superbly organized with keynote addresses on the Festival Circuit in the morning, followed by twenty to thirty special interest papers to choose between and at plus a variety of symposia & workshops in the afternoon. To sample the diversity of the later Working papers choose Classical Indian dance, Post Modern Dance with The Dance Exchange India Play on Hawaiian Art and the Seven Knowledge Cycle; John Flueck on 'Cultural Diversity in the Australian Film', Fusion Culture with The Cultural Arts Workshop, several sessions on puppetry, drama in education and community arts etc. In addition there were continuing children's activities such as the Bob Ross Workshop by Blue Fols Community Arts Association, performances by Salamanca Theatre Company, State Opera, The Black Company, Tasmania Puppet Theatre and numerous others.

For some, the congress undoubtedly provided a framework in which to explore their own work further under pressure. Peter O'Connor's Communication Skills Workshop for instance had students from the Victorian College of the Arts visiting improvisation and group dynamics to write a play throughout the week. For others in community arts, the venturing by educators of their precepts was a useful guide to how to apply for funding.

Yet for many practitioners of the arts a gap was felt between their own interests and those of the educators, between their own form of expression and the theory-formulating language of the keynote addresses. The immediate impact and simplicity of Bruce Fox's parables or brash talk such as 'a far better argument for valuing the arts on par with the sciences in educational curricula than the philosophical argument for objectivity in art education'. Sadly, however, the latter may well be the most

effective weapon against the decision makers who throw the arts, foreign languages and home economics into one big bag of less important subjects scheduled during the sleepy hours the conflict with school curriculums.

As a final point, towards my mind, the sprawling congress the keynote addresses had no uniformity, male, male-female, and English speaking host for an international UNESCO-sponsored congress even goes as far as Australia. All theoretic speakers were from Australia, Britain, Australia or New Zealand nationals. This obscured the frame of reference for the conference, the definition of 'our own culture', which is one of course, altered at the end of the week, said we must know better 'celebrating cultural diversity' and acknowledging 'other' cultures. Rather than that 'we' — 'They' approach I should have preferred one of greater emphasis on releasing the imagination to re-imagine 'to create their own culture'.

The educator's reaction to pressure notes and to pull back of anyone goes on for me on a climb of empowerment did not go unnoticed in several conference sessions. After a superb presentation by John Fox (Artistic Director, Galactic Smithoblog) of 'Young' associated in which the Welfare State seems to be open, drawing on various archetypal symbols and ritual sources, to provide a new sense of identity when parents and children names, cast lots and the size of it at the forefront. Despite an considerable British Arts Council funding, the group, however, does not appear afraid of disconnection from traditional or other orthodoxy. Drawing on the road of ancient Lunga and other cultures they create their own symbols and construct objects for people to hang their imagination on, often staging events as a ritualistic statement in depressed city areas. Attempting to break down boundaries between art forms the work of the Fine Arts Circuit is very physical and pragmatic and based on a synthesis between various forms of expression. He sees his role constantly, says John Fox, as channelling energy between a society and people.

In urging the case for the arts in education by placing art on road, Roban N. Wilson (The Artillerists of Freedom) suggested that 'events in themselves are not based in form, but rather they are dynamic and free'. Memory leaves them in order to conserve and adds to them in order to interpret. Therefore, and because one person could not even experience the portion of the INSEA's event, I hesitate to speak of the conference that was or was not, as will be mentioned.

To see the world as a... suggest Wilson, is to see a dynamic web of relationships. To have dynamic vision is an interplay, perceiving and memory in order to teach the web of relationships with the mind.'

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Melbourne.
Bookings 6314888.

People such as an actress in the cast ensemble house of Twelfth Night. There is not only reason to think as to what will happen in the ensemble house, they still don't know all of what happened in the recent past.

The separated houses in the next few months — what a new director to come must be expected. The past is the period of December 1977 to January 1978 during which time Bill Redmond was appointed as Artistic Consultant for 1978 and the controversial "rescue programme" initiated; small cast pop-ups "star" TV names in crowd pullers. Crisis of the day seems, which effectively leaves Twelfth Night as a roadhouse for a bygone repertoire — providing precious little work for Queensland actors — were assured in April's meeting with the Board that it was unacceptable. Point of the meeting who applied for the Directorship was good enough, to save the present a "continuously "safe" programme had to be restored in Brisbane, the AGM of July elected a rather different version of the crucial events of last Christmas.

It now seems that the Board had selected a local upholder with whom they were satisfied and were about to announce the appointment when the Theatre Board of the Australia Council requested a consultation with the Twelfth Night board and subsequent — and perhaps consequent — in this intervention, the Redmond appointment and the "rescue programme" were implemented largely? and now they all of "Why is the Board to my view giving upresque the last gas?"

Even more importantly, what precisely does the role and powers of the Australia Council in, apparently overseeing the Board's decision to appoint the Director of their choice? hence if the Council is ultimately responsible for the maladjusted use of its own funds?

Maladjusted it may well seem, unless the new Artistic Director is able to impose a very different policy and his or her supervisor and problem solver in charge. Thus far the director has displayed little awareness of the scope or the responsibility inherent in a role as Queensland's potential second professional company. Indeed it seems obscure — perhaps understandably in view of the harsh nature economic pressures — with that need for decisions in and out of concern — why will presumably desert these TV's to set the scene for collapse?

More disturbingly, there still appears to be a tendency towards local interests as a company colony to be based. The Queensland public is viewed mostly as a means to a band of amateurists capable only of inexplicable death stages. Who must be brought into the theatre by sugar position and, once forced under gradually reduced from its primitive mass. Thus it may sweep us as an appreciation of something a bit more advanced, or less noisy as these Bangkok art. As long as the spirit of the crass and self-perpetuating, second hand aspects of the image of the company of those responsible for the Theatre's future, it can be seen only as a parasitic growth irrelevant to the community

The Continuing Saga of Twelfth Night

Veronica Kelly

which houses it and as a potential financial disaster. And a financial cost, paying by *An Ideal of Love* which suffered 15% losses. Who needs it? And in view of the deserved fate of the *Tales*, will we really be paying it?

It looks like it's up to you Artistic Director. An appropriate representation this must stand with no heavy and? new roles the role of the Theatre's house. The Twelfth Night Board has fought with Taurian energy in view the Theatre through this year's economic constraints, including a four week period when the State Government imposed a suspension of operations. It would be misleading if the present determination to save Twelfth Night financially were to be viewed as a general forgetfulness of what ultimately it is to be saved for.

Meanwhile, professional theatre in Brisbane is not dead this year, it's just moved to new address. David Cawthron's Brisbane Actors' Theatre has a brilliant season of *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* followed by *Julius Caesar*. Currently the BAC is playing Ayckbourn's *Womankind*. And there are

others as — wait for it — Twelfth Night. Theatre. One of the many reasons that the Twelfth Night Company can hardly afford to play in an own house, when the Building Trust seems the Theatre is satisfied at half price — hard to tell whether they're being generous or just pragmatic.

Ken Finneray just got a season of that old Boulevard last year *Sorrell's in China* in a Decatur church hall in the Valley — packed out both with considered school audiences and the aforementioned role. Both Cawthron and Finneray were invited as candidates for the Twelfth Night Artistic Directorship. Bill Grember. The glass certainly isn't growing under the feet of the professional directors and actors.

The spot wasted by Twelfth Night is well and truly being occupied which doubtless has not escaped the attention of intending bolters both of the State and the Australia Council. Let's hope Twelfth Night is also getting the message — the intent is here, the audience are here, and one would never dream along with patronising hydraulics. Queensland doesn't need a commercial theatre just for its schools, it needs a second professional company with a coherent artistic policy. The question arises, will that company be the Twelfth Night Theatre Company? or should it be allowed to do exactly as it makes room for more vigorous growth?



Twelfth Night Theatre

Adelaide Commentary

by Tony Baker

Changes in name and personnel in official theatre in Adelaide seem just that, merely changes in name and personnel. They also provide an interesting example of a cultural establishment at work.

The most obvious change is that of name from the South Australian Theatre Company to that of State Theatre Company. This will make life easier for those who had previously confused it with the South Australian Theatre Club in planning their entertainments. It will also bring the company's name into line with that of State Opera.

But it is a case of what's in a name, indeed. The company is a statutory body and, since the Act regulating it has not been amended, it technically remains the SATC, with the known as and regarded as the State Theatre Company.

Of more interest is the departure of the aging doyen of South Australian theatre, Colin Halligan, as chairman at the age of 70 and

with half a century of experience as the performing arts in South Australia behind him. The new chairman is Mr Michael Grey, a state-awarded crown solicitor and member of the board for the past three years. Mr Grey is not a public figure in Adelaide but is one who has not had but a highly regarded as an intelligent, able administrator and long-term member of the board. His appointment was formally approved by Finance Minister Mr Maloney responsible for arts development in the State. But the prime mover was undoubtedly Mr Len Aspinall who operates independently from the position of Director, Art Development in the Primary Department as a kind of cultural icon.

Mr Grey's appointment was an excellent example of the strengths and limitations of an entrenched establishment. It presented the opportunity to move influential position of who's from the same culture who share the same values, share the same acquaintances but who can be relied on not to rock the boat, notably moved to work actively to keep it on an even keel. Mr Grey held firmly to this view when he told me shortly after his appointment that he has pursued primarily as chairman of a board rather than as chairman of the popular theatre board.

It is an appointment beyond reproach, it must also be said that it is a very an unoriginal and a tribute to Mr Aspinall's administration the reason for choosing Mr Grey seems just the man to ensure efficient administration and financial restraint, and to see that the board maintains good liaison between the two real centres of power, the official par-a-go and the Company's actual director and staff.

I might not the artistic director because, regardless of other management and board player participation in the running of the company the artistic director is very plainly dominant and in the person of Colin Gatt has become even more so in recent times.

The other change in the STC's personnel may have less evident implications and effects and could prove of considerable longer term interest. David Allan, one of the founders of the Trocadero alternative and counterculture group and a drama lecturer has joined the governors. Trocadero have provided many of the most radical ideas taking根 in Adelaide theatres in the past couple of years.

On the STC board Mr Allan could bring stability and alternative theatre closer together, or, if this seems too fanciful, could at least be an additional focus on the side of those with a taste for the radical.

Don't forget Tassie

Karl Hubert

Tasmanians are quite used to see their allied to all stages and it is understandable that they should be surprised when they consider a concentrated assault by the mighty and powerful forces ruling on the North Island.

This spring, The last performance by the Australian Opera — some locals think it should be called the Sydney Opera — took place at Hobart's Theatre Royal in 1971. Now there is to be a season by the AO at the Royal and the Princess Theatre in Launceston later this year (October-November).

Two years ago, the writer saw a prediction by the Melbourne Theatre Company in St Martin's, when a large map of Australia formed the backdrop. It was found that once upon a time there had been a Tasmanian branch in Cape Town and there was no trace of Tasmania.

Later, a number of more detailed plans and it was found that Tasmania was positioned on the map, too. The explanation was that the map location had been too big for St Martin's stage and earlier this one off Durban, Tasmania was deleted.

Since 1971, many Tasmanians have become accustomed to the idea that apparently they are not worthy of grand opera. Initially there were objections, it was said that Tasmania too were paying rates and so the AO received subsidies from the public, just as it had a moral obligation to appear in the State, particularly if it was a national company.

The AO argued that the Theatre Royal was too small for grand opera, consequently overlooking the fact that the big State Bond had done a. The usual argument was equally unconvincing, namely that the company would lose money. Of course, it would lose money, but did it not lose money elsewhere too? In fact, how many opera companies in the world make money?

So the announcement that the company would leave Tasmania's Des Poulpeau to

Tasmania was a genuine surprise and people are asking themselves, why the sudden concern for Tasmania? One answer may be that funds have become available from the Australian Council for such tours and that there is a financial compensation for the AO.

In fact, just before it decided on an Australian tour, the State Opera of South Australia announced it would come to Tasmania early next year, and the Victoria Opera was also strongly interested in appearing in the four.

However, this is only part of an answer. The AO will be one of the major attractions of the last Italian Festival in Tasmania of which Claude Alonso is the president, the same Claude Alonso who was chairman of the AO for a number of years.

It may be assumed that it paid a few visits in any case. Tasmania have reason to be grateful to him. There is no doubt that The Des Poulpeau will have an excellent season here — and that he will last many. However, that is as it should be, either it is cheap, but essential to the well being of a nation.

Ray Stanley's

WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS



People in the film industry are saying John Wayne has made a mistake at a crucial point in his film career by accepting a stage role. He was being sought for several roles in upcoming films, but is committed for a year in *Death and the Maiden*, but he made a career mistake after that if world for an another at least before it was released, by which time he will have a lot of ground to recover. Tipped to take over *Wyatt's* current place as No. 1 Australian male heart-throb is Bryan Brown, closely followed by John Hargraves.

As a matter of fact, a little while ago I had the opportunity of talking to Brown and Hargraves on the set of *The Child Avery Show* in Queensland and both made it clear that, although they would like to do occasional stage work, they have no intention of giving up for lengthy periods. I shouldn't be surprised if Mr Hargraves, who tells me he's likely to do several TV series of *Young Romeo* follow in the steps of Bill Hunter and appear in a play by Hopkins at the Playbox in Melbourne.

Greer Bartell says on the set of *7045* and the *Malaya Rebutant* has written a screenplay which adapts those prison plays of Jim McPhee — *The Chocolate Frog*, *The Old Familiar Face* and *New Over Your Garden Grow* — and probably with the latter film Hopkins will be involved with Studio Productions in making the picture, which is likely to be directed by Brian Blessed. Blessed will play the role of How Does Your Garden Grow he did for the MTC and it's likely both John Hopkins and Bryan Brown will also be in the film.

My information last month about actor Hamilton Deane being given of honour at the Drama Society's dinner on November 11 was incorrect. For the simple reason he didn't a sample of poems (aptly titled *in fact*) in author Ivan Baden, who played Lord Godalming in *Drama* back in 1932. An Deane performed the sample for so many years on the stage however an empty chair or being reserved for him at the dinner, in his honour. Sir Robert Rumsey has been doing his one-man Henry Lawson show in London's Lyric Theatre for a few nights. I performed

Hear Peter Yeldham's play *Away Match* written in collaboration with Maxine Worth, and which had a season at Maxine's Street last year,

has been playing in packed houses since last January at the Komodo Theatre in Berlin. Since the German love Yeldham's style of comedy as it is his best bit play as that, the others being *Death on the Wing* and *The Moon Lit Down*. He of course acted back in Sydney now, writing TV and film scripts.

Wynona if we shall see that future media people comedy musical based on Noah's Ark. It ran for three years in Rome and also has had several bit runs in Austria and Germany, and currently is playing in Madrid and Mexico with eight other world capitals lined up to follow. An English adaptation, with lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, opens in London on November 1, with this night already purchased for nearly a million pounds. The English translation of the Italian title is *See Another Place* at the Table and the producers are offering a copy of *Julian's Ark* to the person who provides a better name in English.

Those Perth AFL Awards. After all the enthusiasm shown in favour that year, last Friday who pops up everywhere will be known as John Michael Hollywood Eat Your Heart Out Hanson. I was asked immediately in front of the American visitors who were updating themselves with laughs, and from one came a very suitable "Star". Were Frank Thring and Noel Ferrier really acknowledging their song and dance act for Robert Helpmann? If so, I've got news for them. The phrase "that's last for dying days" of the Fraser Government" in his acceptance speech for his award-wining award, caused Bob Ellis to be good-humouredly dubbed next day by *Perthshire Advertiser* as "Australia's Vanuatu Helpmann".

The search for Crown Achievement does not surprise me at all. The old JC Williamson Theatre Ltd at one time toyed with the idea of staging it, but did not believe it was a great production, despite the fact the Australian public always tends to see and read about Roxy for more than they do in Britain. Some people suggest its because due to the names of June Laver and John Hulme — but there has been little evidence previously of Australian TV star attracting people to the theatre.

Following on the wave of Lawler's *The Doll Dodge* and Kenneth The Comedy Album comes *The Spelling Family Album* a name from Cate Ryan's *Elspeth* which played and at Melbourne University's Guild Theatre in May and transferred to La Mama. Now the play gets a second season at La Mama from October 19 to November 10, played alternately with companion play *Get Me Now*. Joining the cast of *Elspeth* will be Anne Minser from TV's *Cop Shop*.

Although holding no ticket for the Old Town Theatre Company, was surprised to find a real expression from the Hopkins Theatre Foundation patiently applying the Australian Council's donation of cut off funds to the Town and Country because it had raised some Australian plays elsewhere were so poorly treated they had to be withdrawn! Hopkins was therefore doing a better job than Principal who

promoted the two Hopkinsies for Hopkins! When I suggested Helpmann, in trying to get Hopkins to the Old Town in more Hopkinsiably would be giving them no seat and thus providing work for Australian and less money for other professionals, the application from Hopkins was that this was the area of commercial theatre, and that subsidised theatres do not need to get break-even seats!

John Gauthier has been playing the lead in *Clown* for an amateur society in Shepparton, for which he was of course paid. Seems a good idea for them to be more of that sort of thing. Apart from the employment aspect, actors get to play roles which they might otherwise not have the opportunity to do, and the company in question has the chance to work with a genuine local. And who's gonna grant?

Recently had a telephone call from Peter Adams, who had spent a week-end in Sydney visiting Gough and Peter's Day, and who told me all about them. We chatted for some fifteen minutes, during which time I was chanced under the impression I was talking to Peter Adams. It was not until he asked if I could provide the telephone number of a certain film director and I quoted of he was going into and director's new picture, that the penny dropped it was Peter Adams of *3120*. And who about that unusual discovery made by Australian Major Magazine, the Australian hangover band never!

Those people wanting to have up to the minute news of him and his people throughout the world, really should subscribe to the weekly *Sixties International* edited by Peter Hobin. A free specimen copy can be obtained by writing to Classics Publishing, Seven International, Film House, 142 Warwick Street, London, W1V 4BR, and mentioning *Perth Australia*.

The Godfather
Starring MR. CHRIS SHAW
Phone 0827442 0827579
167 Anzac Parade Kensington

KENN BRODZIAK

Robert Page interviews "the very biggest boy behind the scenes" — and hears that he plans to retire.

In the business, the people who get money into commercial theatre are called angels — for the most part they are the ones who cash in when fools fail to breed. In London they often get their fingers bitten, in New York the situation is even worse, yet in Australia though the country is not able to sustain the long runs which give the big returns, they come off well. That is if they put their money on Kenn Brodzak.

The Current Package

His current rate is extremely high and not just for picking shows, but talent spotting too. The girl new cast as Little Orphan Anna was early on spotted out by the famous Brodzak, over, the director was little in her but she remained on the list because he intuitive had indicated her voice. When finally the student of girls was whittled down to three it was obvious to everyone that she stood head and shoulders above the five hundred others they had auditioned.

His package for the next twelve months is already laid and rolling with *Desireless* as the first big attraction. His reasons for picking the various shows here are almost pedestrian simplicity, but the feeling that sets him they will succeed is part of an indefinable sixth sense. "Desireless" was the most controversial play I'd seen since *Godspell*. I found it appealed to all ages, it was hot, it was exciting, it was very theatrical. You had stars in the form of actors and stars in the form of scenery and costumes by Edward Gorey".

Arrow which opens on October 25th at Her Majesty's, Melbourne, he chose on the single fact that it is "the most successful musical in the world" — and the sell out seasons in New York, London, Washington, Florida and San Francisco prove his point. Australia, he believes, wants a good, old-fashioned musical with singalong tunes, dance routines and spectacular costumes and can't fail to follow suit. It will be the most expensive production he has ever mounted with half a million dollars at risk.

His Ultima's visit to Cockey's *The Music Man* and Chisholm's *The Bear* is almost an accident. While an agent was through his lists — missing about Henry Fonda not being fit to travel, Burt Lancaster being tied up and Taylor too expensive ("I paid her to advertise the show as starting at approximately \$30 and then you'd never know when she'd turn up") — he said "I



Kenn Brodzak. Photo: Harry Jay

don't suppose you'd be interested in...?" "I certainly would" said Brodzak. The deal was fixed in twenty four hours and Les Ultima is due to open at the Comedy, Melbourne, on November 1st.

The Festival Centre, Adelaide, called Brodzak to ask whether he had anything to go into the Playhouse in January; a telegram was sent to Dorrit Meissner asking if he could fit in and complete his tour of Australian cities with *Why Not Sing For Breakfast?* these, Canberra, Hobart and Launceston "Derek and you — and that gave us our fourth package, he loves Australia."

The fifth, *Death Trap*, was another Brodzak find. It didn't get rave reviews the first time round. "My report when I saw it was that it would be a hit in New York and within two weeks it was playing to capacity houses and will go for years and years. It is a comedy thriller like Death, though. "Full of gags, but less than death and has a little bit more logic". He shares the worries about the final scene but believes the whole play works well enough to carry it.

The Edgley Brodzak Connection

The 1978/79 season for JC Williamson's Productions is mounted in association with Michael Edgley International, a managerial relationship which has been a consistently successful one since Brodzak's Arrow services joined the JCW network and emerged with their distinctive name for his production company — and without the crippling liability of the theatre buildings. In 1971 Edgley had

merged his company with the old Firm in a threemonths search bid to save its declining fortunes. The young head, then 27, made record profits for the concern but it was too much for too little. Now Edgley is a director of the new JCW Productions with Brodzak as chairman and managing director.

The relationship, though, is a loose one, each going his own way but creating in each other's presentation. The link that binds them together is the high regard in which they hold each other. "I think he is the best showman in Australia", says Kenn with an obviously strong loyalty underlying the remark. "And he thinks I am the best administrator/producer".

Though Edgley is mainly known for cleaves, stars from Russia, and ballet productions — in various permutations and combinations — and Brodzak for theatre, there are no actual lines of demarcation. They buy shows separately, then ask if the other is interested and quite often come together for a joint venture with *A Chorus Line* and *Always...* One major difference between them is that where Edgley wants to risk all on a show, Brodzak has always hedged his bets. When a venture is underway it usually happens that the Brodzak end takes care of production and administration, while Edgley's handles the promotion. "Michael has convinced me to spend the big money on advertising, \$40,000 each on publicity for *Desireless* before it opened, \$80,000 on *Arrow* and \$130,000 for *A Chorus Line*". But Brodzak still enjoys the healthy breakes that sometimes come for free — as with *A Chorus Line*, when Michael Bennett's casting of the girl in England getting press here, and when the difficulty of finding a child actress brought the headline "Little Orphan Anna — Where Are You?" — it instantly broke the pattern of confusion of the musical with Anne of the Four Gables.

But even if he is convinced by Edgley, Kenn Brodzak is still sceptical about Australian audiences; publicity may tell them a show is on but the claims of awards and record boxoffice returns doesn't leave them unswayed. What is in my mind a healthy open-mindedness does not seem the ruling of the often till for Brodzak. It is not, he says, that audiences here are any more intelligent than their American counterparts just more discriminating. London and New York also benefit from a high local and overseas in-trust trade where people are in town for only a few days and go out already three parts convinced that

they will be interviewed.

When Brodbeck knows now largely what is to happen on Broadway and in the West End for years to come, and even knows within moments of their conception the ideas that are developing in writer's heads in the UK and the US, discussions can be continued over a long period. Riesco recited off a list to make the point, Michael Bennett's new show *Queen of the South* (Broadway, *King of Hearts*, to open on Broadway in October), *Clay* which has just had a sketchy premiere in Toronto and which Brodbeck has been watching for three years, *Sweeney Todd* with Angela Lansbury already cast. There and a dozen more are possible for late 1999 and beyond, but first have to prove themselves with audiences.

The Edgley - Williamson Production is up, then, a largely conservative, there might be dauntingly large amounts of money involved but the risks when tried and tested overseas products are the simplest, are not as great as one would imagine. But such caution in handling money the proven is understandable when the first production of Brodbeck's casting the new JCW *Burton, After Canterbury Tales*, despite being a sequel to a successful import, premiered here and was a flop. Not even a musical, he says it was simply because "it wasn't a good show — it didn't deserve to succeed".

Brodbeck and Australian Drama

That *The 5th* and *All That Jazz* and *Big* *They* are the only shows he's tried in a long time that have originated here, success and the ferocious regard in Hill theatres like the Melbourne and Sydney *Her Majesty's* have largely put him in a box that can no longer consider productions such as *Requiem*, and *Death of a Salesman* both of which he picked up from Bert Filton's *Independent* in the early days. The latter was a particular love of his on which he was prepared to lose money, now he flatly admits that he is never likely to indulge such enthusiasm again.

Negotiations were entered into with the MTC to take over The Club for which he would willingly have arranged a transfer, "but they kept on extending". With *Requiem* possible he wanted to take up Paul Her's offer but there were just no dates for it at the Comedy and so it went to the Playbox under Hopkins.

For some time, he has been looking for an Australian musical one of the few ambitions he has left. One idea was a Peter Whittle *Clippy* type plot, but the book hasn't as far adapted to the stage. He joined a consortium to pay Max Shar for the outline of a musical comedy on the taking of Whiteman, but that also went away, "it was more a writers sketch, though a good one, but not a play".

David Williamson has earned his respect, though more for his achievements than for his plays, which I don't know enough about. But when I do want something of his, every time I look where he is, he's overseas. Brodbeck would have gone to Dorothy Hewitt's *Penelope's Cross*

despite the bad crits, as it's about a period he knew personally, but, he says, he was actively prevented by some of the cast and various agents.

His own view of Australian drama notwithstanding, and which some might think a self fulfilling one given that large sums are just not raised as local product, he does believe that there could be a healthy export of shows overseas. London and Broadway products are constantly in touch with him about pre-prints here "because, believe it or not, they are short of product".

Subsidy

Brodbeck is unrepentant in the view that subsidy is a bad thing and that theatres should be self supporting. The monoliths of the "houses of theatre", New York and London, are not to match those with Government and — thereby discounting the Royal Court, the RSC, the National and the last *Macbeth* (minus the male version) and *A Chorus Line* began as subsidised theatres.

To the argument that internationally most of the modern playwrights of any stature have emerged in subsidised theatres, Brodbeck answers that before suddenly the *Independent*, the Ensemble and the New Theatre were producing the

most important playwrights out there as membership subscriptions alone. He explains in so far as subsidy developed Williamson, Benn, Hewitt, Blair, Spens and Sjoman — the whole local now waste — Brodbeck admits that *Hilary* been good, but says flatly "I'm not trying to develop a native culture".

Though a great believer in the one system — by which he means people as well known as Johnny Bartholomew, Bill Penryman, Colleen Hewitt and new John Waters — he looks over such talents as John Gaden, Gertieh Turner, Kate Puglisi, Bruce Myles and Robyn Nevin come. The subject marks for him one of the major divergences between the two forms: "I can't be converted otherwise than that the public want to see stars".

Manly the distance exists with person stated "with a few exceptions, subsidised theatres cultivate a formula of director, actor and management which is alien to what I believe in — they will not accept the fact that they exist because of commercial theatre". Bold words. He blames the press, and particularly *Theatre Australia*, for allowing this lack of humility and disregard of commercial theatre to be given undue publicity.

Achievements, Ambitions and Retirement

Kenn Brodbeck is pleased with his success, it has given him everything he wants. All that worries him is that the money that once could mean disaster has now become only figures. To the observer, still with a touch of romanticism in the view of theatre, Brodbeck appears now to live at every as merchandise to be marketed. He admits to having lost many of his old enthusiasts and claims that for the most part he "hasn't had any other". Being the head of one of the few companies to have consistently paid a dividend to its shareholders, he considers to be one of his finest achievements. With such a track record, finding the angle, to put up money "has been the easiest part of it".

Trying to draw lines on standards proved impossible. The only play he would not do on principle are the ones he has seen in the US where the blacks attack the whites mercilessly, but when I asked why he hadn't mounted any of the "big shows" he answered that "really it would have to be because I wouldn't think they'd make money". Not because they're racists? "No — what could be more ridiculous than some of the other things I've done?"

It was this detachment which made the biggest bombshell of the interview believable. Kenn Brodbeck announced that he is to retire "in the foreseeable future" and that he will spend his time between Melbourne and New York. There is as yet no sign of an heir apparent, but the eternal family tree presented — "I don't know the meaning of the word") doesn't plan these things, he lets them happen. Whatever replaces him has the unenviable task of following the man who has brought here everything from The Beatles ("I just liked the sound of their name") to *A Chorus Line* and above all, needs that sixth sense that can unashamedly pack out success.



Leah Purcell "Lucy",
John Waters "Count Dracula"



A Chorus Line.



NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY
AT THE PLAYHOUSE, PERTH

presenting

Season Two 1978

The National Theatre Company acknowledges the financial assistance of the Australia Council, the W.A. Arts Council and the W.A. Department of Education.

Performing September 12 to October 14 at the Playhouse

Richard II

by William Shakespeare

With Robert van Mackelenberg, Edgar Mearns, Linda Taylor and Alan Caswell

Packed with spectacle and pageantry, this famous play presents the dilemma of leadership. Can Bolingbroke, the modern revolutionary, rightfully depose God's anointed king? Is Richard - the welful monarch, surrounded by flatters - fit to rule?

The poignant and moving drama of Richard II remains startlingly relevant in our own age. The production will be designed by Sue Russell and directed by Stephen Barry.

Performing September 14 to October 14 in the Cinema

Keep on Truckin', Francesca

Directed by Christine Randall and featuring
Pat Skerrington and Denise Kirby

From the well-meaning sexist jokes that husbands tell, to rock-sing lyrics and the park or blue blanket they put on your baby in the hospital nursery, sexism is still a fact of life for half the people in the world - women. *Keep on Truckin'*, Francesca is not just another women's show with hard-line speeches and cries of "no more men".

It is a celebration of the gains made by the women's liberation movement and a plea for the revolution to continue.

Performing October 19 to November 11 at the Playhouse

THE HOSTAGE

by Brendan Behan

This magnificent extravaganza of a play is the greatest product of Behan's stormy, lyrical genius. It is a witty and often profound comment on Anglo-Irish relations - packed with comedy, songs, dancing and romance.

The story of a British soldier held captive in a Dublin lodging house as hostage for the release of an I.R.A. man is filled with bawdy subterfuge. This newly re-visit is directed by Mike Morris.

Performing at the Playhouse, November 21 to December 23

No, No, Nanette

The new 1925 musical, adapted by Bert Shevelove from the book by Otto Harbach and Frank Mandel, with the music of Vincent Youmans and lyrics by Irving Caesar and Otto Harbach. *WITH THE W.A. ARTS ORCHESTRA*. The happy, happy musical that soars and soars its way through many of the most loved and best remembered songs of all time - "Tea for Two,"

"I Want to be Happy," "I'm Contented to the Breeze" and many, many more. A full cast and chorus look forward to dazzling you with spectacle and panache. We want you to be happy this Christmas, so bring all your family and friends to this splendid musical. You may want to join in.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION FOR CHILDREN

Performing December 2 to December 23 at the Playhouse

The Cocky of Bungaree

by Richard Tukash

Cocky Bourke's hard luck never seemed so bad. He was the only bloke to have his woolshed burned down in the Flash Floods of '56 and, in the Epidemic of '59, even his budget came down with foot and mouth disease. But when the trouble began between the Pastoralists and the Shearers, a lesser man than Cocky Bourke would have been all fit throwing himself in the sheep dip and ending it all. The hilarious events at Bungaree at the end of last century are recorded in a robust musical play, using the traditional songs and folklore of one of the most colourful periods of our past. Your subscriber ticket may be converted to TWO seats for children at no cost.

I never cease to marvel at the vigor and success of your theatre. Whatever your problems, I look at your achievements from the perspective of twenty years, remembering when your theatre started, recalling also how many theatres began in the US that have since disappeared. It is a splendid record.

American writer Albert Maltz sent that birthday message in 1953, commemorating the 20th anniversary of Sydney New Theatre's foundation — an event that had taken place in 1933.

Forty-six years old in 1979, New Theatre is now Sydney's longest-running theatre. Maltz's perceptive note, and with an often tumultuous history, why is it that a surprisingly large percentage of the theatre-going public is unaware today of its existence? The reasons are complex, but some answers might be found in the nature of the times that gave rise to the theatre's formation, and the varied political climate in which it spent its first twenty-five years.

In Australia as in America, the late nineteen twenties and much of the thirties were years of acute financial depression. Long dark queues were common as were evictions of families unable to pay the rent, of even such standard houses. Hugo, for the majority of would-be wage earners, was at a minimum. It was against this background that the New Theatre movement was born in America. Its earliest productions were chiefly "agit-prop" (agitational propaganda) sketches. Then came Clifford Odets' famous one-act "Waiting for Lefty" written for a New York taxi drivers' strike fund. It soon became a Broadway hit, eventually to be played from coast to coast in twenty cities by twenty different companies.

Following the American lead, amateur Workers' Theatre groups sprang up in various Australian capitals — the Workers' Art Club in Sydney, the Workers' Theatre Group in Melbourne and

NEW THEATRE MOVEMENT

PART I 1932-48

Mona Brand looks at the development of the New Theatre Movement in a two-part series.

Perth, the Student Workers' Theatre in Brisbane. As in America, these first plays were short, locally written and prop numbers (1930's version of today's Street Theatre) presented at factory gates, at street corners and at Labor Party and Communist Party branch meetings.

Crade as many of the sketches might have been from the dramatic standpoint, their topicality and veracity, however, had an instant appeal for audiences only too happy at the somebody poking fun at the bosses, the politicians, and the economic system depicted as responsible for the capitalist recession. Another important role of these groups at the time was their opposition to the rise of fascism and the danger of world war.

The Sydney and Melbourne groups, in 1932 and 1936 respectively, adopting the name New Theatre League, later to be shortened to New Theatre, were the first to establish themselves as serious theatres, with *Waiting for Lefty* the first play to put each of them on the map. When Sydney New Theatre won the 1936 City of Sydney Established One Act Play Competition with their American play as their entry there

were a few criticisms of "expensive passage" (this helped to give the play a long run but the *Press* magazine *The Stage* said "... its dialogue is alive and alert with passion, of emotional impact, there is provocative drama at its strongest".

But by 1938 New Theatre in their Pitt Street premises had already produced a number of more generally acceptable plays by writers like Bernard Shaw, Upton Sinclair and Muriel Rukey — productions that were to set the pattern of future New Theatre programming: locally meaningful contemporary works and classics interspersed from time to time with overtly political plays, revivals and revues, some with more than a touch of "agit-prop", some cleverly satirical.

During its forty-six years history, Sydney New Theatre has mounted some 380 productions, of which no more than eighteen can be said to have been narrowly political in that they have criticised the "sacred cows" of successive periods in much the same way that other groups do today with impunity. Yet it has been these comparatively few productions that have given New Theatre its reputation as some quarters as purdy and simple a "theatre of the Left", despite the fact that the majority of its offerings have been works by universally accepted writers like Shakespeare, Shakespeare, Molère, Chekhov, Sean O'Casey, Clifford Odets, B B Frostley, Lillian Hellman, Arthur Miller, Brendan Behan, William Saroyan, Thornton Wilder, Albert Maltz, Tennessee Williams, John Peter, Ted Willis, John Whiting, Kurt Vonnegut, David Storey, Tom Stoppard and Arnold Beckett — the last mentioned admired today as trendy, but first produced by New Theatre in 1949.

Often unrecognized too is New Theatre's long-held policy of presenting (mostly new) Australian plays, of which there have been seventy-eight to date by writers including Louis Esson, Leslie Rose, Barry Rose, Katharine Prichard, George Lansbury, Ossie Grey, George Orwell, Dick Diamond, David Martin, Ralph Princeton, Alan Seymour, Sympathetic Cruiser, Frank Hardy, Kevin McGrath, Barry Oakley,

Of Men and Men (PHOTO: Edmund Alcock, Priscilla Lunn, Reg Lye, John Gray)



John Rosser, Kevin Morgan and myself. But critics of the Establishment has sometimes touched a too sensitive nerve and New Theatre has more than once been the subject of censorship attempts. The most notorious of these took place in 1938 around Clifford Odets' short anti-Nazi play *Till the Day I Die*, performances of which incited various manifestations of hostility in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

Of Sydney New Theatre's first performance of this play directed by Jervis Wells at the Savoy, the *Sydney Morning Herald* wrote (2nd July 1938): "... that, concern-traited dramatic energy in the writing, as well as noise and terror ... here and there the attack on the Nazis becomes shrill, but mostly it grips the unbiased observer." Following the second performances on 23rd July, Hitler's Consul General in Australia — Dr Aitken — protested to the Federal Government who in turn apprised the NSW Chief Secretary, with the result that as late as 5 pm New Theatre Secretary Victor Arnold was informed the play could not go on that night.

Deciding to test this ban in the court of public opinion, the show opened to a packed audience with a revival of *Waiting for Lefty* as the first half of the programme. At interval Arnold informed the issue audience that the second half of the programme would consist of "an un-named play". This turned out to be *Till the Day I Die*. At the end of the first scene, with the Gestapo due to knock on a door and break in, the audience was treated to the exciting spectacle of the Sydney police charging through instead, shouting "The play must stand!" Victor Arnold, playing the lead, asked the audience, "Do you want to see this play?" A unanimous thunder of "Yes" — from police — on with the show. The next day the papers were full of stories and pictures about the night's more than usually dramatic performance.

Meanwhile in Perth a gallery of local Nazi sympathizers paniced about the play's attack on Hitler, and in Melbourne the Workers' Theatre Group found that every city and suburban Theatre and Hall

had been notified that the play must not be shown on their premises. Using a巧nically, a friendly mayor was able to have the Collingwood Town Hall made available, but when it arrived for the performance he found four hundred police surrounding a hall padlocked against cast and audience. Undeterred, and to the cheers of the multitude, Mr. Whistley let himself in by climbing through a window — only to find that his opponents had removed all the chairs. A stormy protest meeting replaced the play. *Till the Day I Die* was not performed publicly in Melbourne until February 1940.

Despite official attitudes these heady days in the theatre received mostly sympathetic press coverage — a situation that was to change in the late forties and fifties.

But much was to happen in the meantime in South Australia a group that was later to call itself Adelaide New Theatre staged two plays including *Waiting for Lefty*. Then in Brisbane the Student Workers' Theatre Group, that later adopted the name Unity established itself with *Till the Day I Die*.

War broke out, and the departure of members to the various Services forced the disengagement of all New Theatre groups except Sydney and Melbourne who carried on with reduced members. By 1942 when Sydney New Theatre had moved to premises in Castlereagh Street the membership of the U.S.S. at the war had caused an atmosphere of general official tolerance towards left-wing organisations, and newspaper critics seemed less in awe due respect to the high standard of production, writing and acting often presented at the New. Sydney people appearing in Castlereagh Street who later became professionals included Jervis Wells, John Gray, Gert Gray, John Hepworth, Pat and Cicely Flower, Ken Warren, Jean Bion, Jack Pugie and John Armstrong, while at 93 Flinders Street in Melbourne the New Theatre there provided actors like John Blundell, Maria Vaughan and John Scott (playing a child in *Tomorrow the World*) with early stage experience.

After the war New Theatre companies

were re-eked in Adelaide and Perth, and Brisbane's Unity got together again in 1945. George Petersen, Labor member for Blaxland in today's NSW Parliament was the theater's secretary from 1946 to 1956 and recalls that the first play was George Orwell's *Down the Bottom*. His work was mainly administrative, but he says, "I did perform and must have been one of the wiser actors to tread the boards ... It seems to me in retrospect that we had the wort of both worlds. We had neither an amateur cast that was professional enough, nor were our plays and theatre performances adequate for the political tasks of a left-wing theater." But all former members of the group might agree with him, but the Brisbane branch of the New Theatre movement, like those in Adelaide and Perth, ceased operations some years ago, so perhaps that is a correct assessment.

Sydney New Theatre was riding a wave of comparative prosperity in 1948 when Sean O'Casey's play *The Star Posed Red* opened to a chorus of warm review. On March 8 the *Sydney Morning Herald* critic said that the production was "... so good that it deserved discriminating and critical patronage by all serious students of drama and life. Although protracted and unguided, the play is magnificient theatre, with galleries of inspired laughter to release its strain".

This was the last review of a New Theatre production to appear in *The Herald* for many years. Was the critic too enthusiastic about this very controversial play? In retrospect, this withdrawal of Herald coverage seems to have been the first big blow of the cold war that was to break in the Australian New Theatre movement for the next twelve years, bringing with it a dearth of review, a parallel advertising boycott, and expenses like the refusal of a suburban Town Hall for a performance of the popular Australian folk musical, *Woolly Sheep*.

Next month:
The Cold War and After.

Cecile Flower and Margaret Olley painting set of *Waiting for Lefty* for 1940 production

Down the Bottom (1947) Jerome Levy as William Lane



Kristian Frederikson



Designer Kristian Frederikson
Photo: Sathy Edward.



Isabel Matheson as Valentine, Arnon Anand as Camille, Act 1 — *The Merry Widow*. Designer Kristian Frederikson

To design a major theatrical production is never easy. To redesign one that is already solidly established in the public's mind is extremely difficult. That was the formidable task confronting Kristian Frederikson when I discussed his work with him. He was working on a completely new production of *Coppelia* for the Australian Ballet with producer George Ogilvie. This was George's first ballet, but Kris has designed many. In fact, he was invited to Australia from his native New Zealand way back in 1981 by Dame Peggy van Praagh to do the costume designs for the company's premiere *Werther*.

The Frederikson/Ogilvie partnership is an old and tried one that dates back to a number of plays they did together at the Melbourne Theatre Company and has continued through to *Il Trovatore* and *Das Gespenster* (costumes only) for the Australian Opera. "I've worked with George on so many productions that I suppose the rapport has developed between us. So working out the designs for *Coppelia* is really an exchange of ideas between us to see what works and what doesn't."

How then does he go about creating new designs for a classic and well-known ballet? Kris Frederikson of the dark, high-contrast-based scenes evoked suddenly smiles. "Well! It's not as difficult as being asked to design a new *Carrie*. That's a nightmare. What I'm trying to do is to get back the fairy-tale aspect of *Coppelia* — restore some of the magic and enchantment and emphasize the romantic element. Delibes was an impressionist in ballet. He balanced Tchaikovsky. Today it has become little more than a series of national dances. George is tailoring the story-line — building up the characters of Swanhilda and Friml. In *Coppelia* is really rejecting life — trying to make more machine, whereas Friml and Swanhilda's story is a celebration of life".

Coppelia is, of course, based on one of

the stories of *The Tales of Hoffmann*. It was first produced at the Paris Opera just before the Franco-Prussian War. It was described as a "ballet-pantomime" when it had its premiere in 1870 with choreography by Saint-Léon. Kris says he has been a ballet fanatic since way back and long ago wrote to Paris for the score so when he was asked to design the ballet, he already had the score. "Then George and I had discussions with Dame Peggy who has done additional choreography for this production. She is there with her hands, invented the whole ballet for us. It was a fabulous performance. I decided after talking with her, to wipe out the Middle-European look and go right back to the Paris original. I tried to see what Delibes and his designers had made for it. It has lost a lot of its detail today. The score tells you what Delibes is saying, if you listen carefully. All designers, you know, are interior producers. We work so closely with them that we go through each production, dramatically, as they do. I'm really drawing *Coppelia* in my mind as I sketch."

Kris paints a lot of sketches which must be approved by both the producer, and in the case of a ballet, the choreographer. He then goes to wardrobe and consults with them. He likes to choose all the fabrics himself. "I am", he says, "A fussy designer. I drive the wardrobe people insane. I have a great admiration for those who actually do the making. They can make or break a production. It's a great problem working with fifty or sixty people and it can be disastrous. Personally, I like to stay with a production and supervise everything from start to finish".

Look has now long he has been given to produce the costume sketches and set models for *Coppelia*. He sighs and says resignedly, "Only a month. I'm working till 4 am every night. It's absurd. Would you believe I was given only a month to do

Model — Act 1 *The Merry Widow*. Costume: Paul Taylor
Open House 1984. Designer Kristian Frederikson



Designer in Excelsis

that immensely elaborate Australian Opera production of *The Merry Widow* — 120 costumes and the most complex sets". I look suitably appalled and he says, "Don't ask me why! It rarely always happens but not to enormous designers. They are green months."

Which brings Kristian Fredriksson, one of the few really successful Australian designers whose work is in constant demand, to a subject about which he feels strongly. He has worked in Australia since 1983 and he has seen both an enormous amount of design talent that is never given a chance. "Yet the big companies are importing designers from overseas while our own just can't get work in the theatre. We are turning out graduates from NIDA at the taxpayers' expense and they are not being used. It's a bad state of affairs. It's like importing box drivers and then bringing out West Indian box drivers."

I say that I've been told by some of the big company people that a director must be able to choose his own designer and so an overseas one will therefore choose an overseas designer whose work is known to him. "Not so", says Kris sharply. "It costs much less to send one Australian designer to consult with the producer in England or whatever he is, and then send on sketches and models, than it does to bring an overseas designer out here two or three times per production and that's what is happening now. I'm not saying we should use only Australian designers, but we should consider them. When Colin George took over the South Australian Theatre Company, he brought on his new designer with him from England and the three Australian designers had to resign. They the English designer went back home!"

Last June, Kris Fredriksson was appointed as Designer in Residence to the Na-

tional Playwrights' Choruscast in Canberra. This was the first time such an appointment was made. Then he read all the scripts, sat in on rehearsals and made himself available to producers, playwrights and actors. "Many playwrights today", he explains, "know nothing at all about stagecraft. I could tell them what is possible and what is not — what will work and what will not and where they've been wrong. I worked a twelve-hour day for two weeks which was a tiring but stimulating. It was strange to be designing in my head without putting anything down on paper, but it was worthwhile. For years designers have been regarded as a necessary evil. Now we are getting recognition."

It can't help to go from a really big budget space or ballet production to a small one but it's something that most designers have to do from time to time. While those of us who know the job of grappling with such problems, say, knowingly, "Ahh! But it might be such a challenge!", designers like Kris Fredriksson feel that a shoestring budget is terribly frustrating says Kris. "A sensible one is all right but when one needs, for example, a chair and the right kind of chair at that and the budget doesn't run to it, the result just isn't very good."

During the intervals on the first night of the Australian Opera's *Die Zauberflöte* in Melbourne, everyone was talking about the really magnificent costumes designed by Kris. His costumes and sets for *The Merry Widow* were received with applause. As a designer, he has both taste and restraint and underlying elegance. If anyone has the ability to reduce the "magic and enchantment" to *Coppélia* it is Kristian Fredriksson. When the curtain goes up on the world premiere of the new Diana Pugh von Praugh/George Optio production of *Coppélia* at Melbourne's Palais Theatre, on February 22nd it should prove to be yet another Fredriksson triumph.



Kristian Fredriksson designs for John Sutton and in role of Lawrence Argent, *Banquo*, *Coppélia*. Producer: The Australian Opera.



John Sutton in Act II — *The Merry Widow*. Designer: Kristian Fredriksson



Model — 8.0. III. Abbildung from the Scenario. The Australian Opera 1986. Designer: Kristian Fredriksson

The last time I saw Paris...

Bogdan Ocerzynski visits France and sends this report

The visitor in Paris with theatregoing inclinations will find the present season far above average. The current Parisian stage fare, though not exactly a regal aesthetic feast, provides at least a very fair and appetizingly varied repast. Should an overrowded calendar leave but a single evening for the theatre, the selection can be easily made:

Jarry and Brook

Peter Brook's production of *Ubu* at Les Bouffes du Nord is a remarkable and, on the whole, a successful experiment, a fresh staging of the theatrical concerns that introduced the Drama of the Absurd more than seventy years ago.

This strange play by Alfred Jarry, written in the 1890s for burlesque, was first performed by players of flesh and blood at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre under the aegis of Lugné-Poe, the most enterprising impresario and discoverer of playwrights of his generation. Pierre Grimaud was the first Peter Ubu and Lazarus France the first Mme Ubu, that loathsome pair who, in Jarry's opinion, symbolized blind and ferocious philistinism.

"I call bourgeois all that is base!", declared Flaubert, and this declaration Jarry illustrated in stages theatrical form. It is a work impossible to classify and difficult to define. Sacha Guitry, when attended its risky premiere in 1896, has best summed it up as a masterpiece of a kind: "You will ask, what is its kind?" In

sooth: "It is rather sickly humor nor strictly parody. I should put it first among excessive comedies, ranking it with great original and powerful buffooneries of all time, with the coarse, highlights and wit that sometimes may contain".

It opens with a thundering thunderclap, where Ubu shows to his wife "Mme Ubu, why are you so ugly tonight? Is it because people are coming to dinner?" The guests arrive and what they say and what they eat and drink and what they do — with Ubu as a "natural" leader of the sweep of destructive depredation on the march — comprises the eight-hour meander of Jarry's own *farce*.

Jarry outlined his notions for the direction to Lugné-Poe, and Brook has cleverly adopted some of them: "As for the action, that takes place in Poland, that is to say, nowhere", he wrote the director. This is a political joke for even the name of Poland had been erased from the map in 1896. Brook appropriately lets the action roam over the performing space of the theatre.

Andréi Kostenko and Jean-Claude Perrin in Peter Brook's *Ubu*.
Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord



Brook proposed an "accord" for Ubu and Mme Ubu but not only fulfilled this request but has found more than one interpreter with an accent. Andras Katalin plays Ubu with the necessary force and snap and the role of Mme Ubu is shared by Michele Colonna and Miriam Odorich.

Ubu, though it has never been as appreciated abroad as in France, has had strong audience everywhere — in France, on Cocteau, Agrippina and Puccini, more recently on Ibsen and Beckett, and abroad on all "absurdists" from Artaud to Albee. It is regarded by French critics as a classic — or semi-classic — and Brook's vivid version will enlighten many. In its present representation, it reveals that it is more than a playful game of historical importance. The vigor of its cutting humour can still electrify the boards.

Elie and Hawks

Terry Hands, the British director who has staged Shakespeare in the House of Commons, is being represented in Paris at the moment by a new production of *Macer or the Cathedral* under the auspices of the Comédie Française in the Salle du Chapelier. The foreboding architecture of the Chapelier, which since its latest transformation might be mistaken for an underground jazz laboratory, is a sorry site for anything. It is as dismal as the Elie tragedy as it would be to the *Romeo* comedy. The wild Paris setting for this play — it was written for the Canterbury festival — would be the Sainte-Chapelle, which was accorded to Grimaud for one of his theatrical experiments.

Hands's production is one of snappy scene apprentices and its choreographic traffic triangles on a checkered floor, barking of the divine prime in which the crafty King Arthur has power opponent. The story of the assassination on Canterbury Cathedral's high altar of Thomas a Becket, the archbishop who dared to defy Henry II, mixed Tintagel in a historical drama and it has recently been re-told by Anouilh.

Elie's Thomas, as Alexandre Niel observed, differs from other portraits in treatment. Here is the man failed by martyrdom, aware of his doom and enlightened, but lost by the evils that the cloak of martyrdom conceals. Four tempests wait him. The first three he can brush aside, but the fourth, possessing something of himself, he can neither shun nor throw away. This fourth figure holds before him a host to his vanity — the hope of heavenly glory after death lie is, first, doubly mortified, by his destiny and by the state of his soul.

There is an eerie conclusion, with the knights who have slain him remonstrating their master, while the monks of Canterbury mourn their lamentation.

It is often claimed that Eliot rendered the poetic drama in the modern theatre. Actually, the 20th century had many poetic playwrights before him. Eliot in *The Merry Wives* with its depreciating Gilbert Murray's translation of the Greek drama *Orphéus*, where his regard for Euripides's facile matching of words and action. And what of Chabrol, of D'Annunzio, of

Morality's Choices, of Happiness in verse, of Death and of Stephen Phillips' new fated love?

Les Miserables on the Caribbean remains a major enterprise. It brought a dignity to the stage of an era and abides well, distinctive in the contemporary repertory. It is still a long reminder of the theatrical practice of beautiful language.

The highly charged text demands a less stated evaluation on the boards. In its latest revival it is more suggestive of a religious ritual than it is of theatrical spectacle.

Hendrik and Ruy

Peter Hall's *Les Gosses Démissionnaires* under Eric van Wijk de Dijkerhof requires more than three hours to perform. It begins at 8:30 and runs — with a slight pause for intermission — until nearly midnight. It seems longer.

Claude Ryg, often an attractive director, is intent on making *Hercule et France* two long ago to mounted an all-star, stylized production of the Austrian writer's incomparable script. *The Blue Accas Lake*. *Cavaliers* at the Opéra Comique. *Requiem* (big names — Jeanne Moreau, Delphine Seyrig, Gérard Depardieu and Michel Lonsdale were the cast — nor such appeal could draw audiences.

Now he modestly avishes that *La Marque du temps* in *Cultures de Marques* is the place for Hendrik, and he has postponed *Depardieu*, established as a leading man in France, to go home in the enterprise, all to no avail. The infernalistic setting is colorful, unspiced and oppressive.

Hendrik has left out the patricians, judge and hangmen, thus depriving his script of varied action. And he has sought to "humanize" the sternly, but he fails at characterization as he fails at generalization. There is no more dramatic technique conceivable in the maneuvering than there is in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

One waits for a fluke of originality, the glint of a fresh idea, but Hendrik has nothing more to say than his compulsive commitment to sap it. Such duality, however, the crumbling of traditions are the stale materials which he sets before the audience in a mounting struggle. We, too, however, are complicitous by their absence of originality, there is nothing.

The result is the same stiff, unoriginal, no thought.

Juliet and Romeo

The Paris Opera ballet had no preference of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* in its current repertory. Yury Grigorovich has been waiting to do one, but his own Ballet company already has Leonid Lavrovsky's celebrated version as a cornerstone of its repertory.

It was a clear case of demand meeting supply, and this new Grigorovich production arrived last night given the Opéra a revised and unique idea of one of the 20th century's major ballets, and a splendid showcase for its young principal dancers. It is a radical departure from Lavrovsky's realistic, story ballet approach and a different enterprise, too, from Nijinsky's vast Italianate fresco staged last year in London and recently repeated here

as usual. Grigorovich has sought to make down the principal vehicle of communication. Music and other storytelling devices have been anguished to the vanishing point. There is no Romeo, no Duke of Verona, and Juliet's name is hardly more than a whisper. Grigorovich assumes that the audience knows in Shakespeare or perhaps he does not care, in eight fast-moving scenes — in two acts of about an hour each — he concentrates on the primary emotions of love and hate.

The production is not specific about time or place. Simon Verstappen's set consists of an army of black partitions hanging from the floor and moved around (mostly) in several different shapes and create changing scene spaces. Here and there a specific object — a balcony, a bed — is located in. The choreographer has imagined the drama taking place at Carnival time and the revelers and masquerades are kind of conveniently mobile backdrop and their costumes supply most of the color in an otherwise neutral space.

Grigorovich's version is more impulsive in its sense of structure, with no contrast between intimate scenes and mass movements, and no stagecraft, than for the choreography in such.

Dominique Khalfoun was the Juliet, with her long slender lines giving a sense of the slightly awkward grace of a teenager. She and Désiré had nothing but four full-scale pas de deux to dance, and while these were exquisitely arranged, Grigorovich did not endow them with choreographic inventiveness or originality to keep a progressive feeling of suspense from setting in. One departure from Shakespeare was to have Romeo dying, but still alive, when Juliet swears, ending the ballet with Juliet bitten

across Romeo's body.

AND

Les Gosses Démissionnaires at the Studio des Champs-Elysées is a "pop" play. The score is a music puzzle fragmented exclusively by male homosexuals yet, despite its setting and subject, it trades neither on the sensational nor on the salacious. It is not a campy farce, but a serious, honest consideration of types from a world long excluded from society and, until lately, from frank intelligent discussion.

The bath's babies are drawn from various classes. There are a buck-toothed schoolboy (he is permitted full range in the parlor's confine); a Canadian who stalks about in a prison; a handmaiden (Dorothy), the muscular proprietor, a potter who, like a grandfather, who simply likes the relaxing atmosphere of the place.

A collection of minor drama compose the action. An unashamed man comes to see his lover and is again spurned, and the elderly client collapses in the sauna room. At one point there is a revealing symposium on the theme that preoccupies the assembled.

The author, Yves Navarre, has devised it as a single, lengthy act, and it sufficiently varied to hold attention throughout. It is constantly provocative and interesting, a rare fact. It is not what is known as an "intellectual" play, but rather a sort of documentary recording, observing a phase of human expression. Its conclusion — by violence rather than by emphasis — is that the homosexual is a man with an extra problem.

Lucien Thierry's staging is acceptable, but perhaps more brilliant direction would have provided the script sharper focus.

Hendrik's *Les Gosses Démissionnaires* ... Photo: Alain Ponteray





Mismatched brilliance of Thomas and Rodger

UNDEN MILK WOOD

EDWARD STANLEY

Music and Sound by Peter Yarrow, Michaela Tisza, Company, Antoinette Fralinger, for Special Events, *Music for the Earth* (1989) (Drama Books Press), *Music for the Earth* (1990).

Really, I am in two minds about the BBC's production of *Walter Sickert's Wood*. On the one hand there is the unadulterated brilliance of poet Dylan Thomas, and on the other the most of-the-time brilliance of director Mick Jaggers. But the two do not necessarily blend. As we know, Thomas wrote of 24 hours in a small Welsh town in a play for women. Apart from an early reading by Thomas himself with a small group, it was first aired by the BBC in January 1954, only 2½ months after the author's death.

I can recall when, in September 1966, it was staged in the West End, Balloch thought it could work on stage. But it did and chalked up 250 performances, and one was audience at the thought of what Thomas might have accomplished at the theatre had he lived. The characters seemed real, although not all of the performances of this first stage production were flawless. As Tyrone wrote at the time: "Some characters their roles confounded, thereby bringing out the worst in Thomas".

Rugger with his usual inventiveness, has not been content to allow Thomson to speak for himself and so, aided by grotesque masks designed by Annie Fraser, presents a series of caricature cartoon-like characters. Very funny indeed are such appearances. The dancer does not reduce much clever rôle playing, however.

All the thought, I maintain, has nothing to do with Thomas Ford and formation by sea a poet, and to listen to the Argo recording of the original BBC broadcast is to assess the music of that poetry, measured by a mainly Welsh cast, with accents modulated as themselves. There is very little poetry coming to this prediction, and very few of the accents seem anything near explosives.

How listen to that recording one heart. Richard Burton as First Narrator takes his speeches at a rattling pace, yet never missing one punctuation mark, as Thomas's words come bubbling out in rapid succession line after the other. Above them a created John Stanton as First Narrator



Kerry Whittle (John Blundell), Malcolm Ranft (2nd Narrator) in the MTC's
Dinner at the Windmill. Photo: David Parker

values the opening speech probably slowly and consider the words. Thomas wrote: do not strike out and let one.

A little better, and more Welsh sounding, e.g. in Malcolm Keast as Second Narrator. Below long though both — as the casting in the cast — few any resemblance of Welsh accents.

I recall when *Dante's Inferno* was first staged in London's New Theatre there was only one Hamlet — Donald Houston — and most effective he was. There really seems no reason for using two, except that Thomas did write for a duet. In the present production, except at the commencement and end of the play, both act in unison at the side of the stage.

Under **John Wood** — with most performers taking several roles — calls for ensemble playing of the highest order if it is to be successful. Here it only works intermittently. Some are good good most of the time, but occasionally fall off in one particular characterisation. The women

are considerably better than the men, although I do think Michael Edgar's Captain Cut (seen inside) is quite powerful. Head and shoulders over everyone else is Bettevy Dunn, always with the right aspect upon a with a slightly different voice or characteristic. Ms Dunn is one of those Melba voices against the BMC, but an inimitable *rasp*, has consistently failed to compete. This is her first appearance in a BMC production since she appeared in *The Party* six back in 1939!

Ms Dunn herself has managed to do without the MTC, doing much respected radio work, playing Mary Everest in *Arthurdale* and keeping the country in highbrow television shows of her own creation (11 types). A critic that she probably is better known on stage in Hobart and Perth than in her native Melbourne. Hopefully the MTC will now realize her potential and use her more in the future.

Some of the brilliance of character Badger includes the chorus of women chalking the house, and four of the women as schoolgirls with Mr. Wadles and others taking the roles of schoolboys. However, the portion of the play is raised right down to be as negligible and, with the ceiling blackouts, any suggestion of time of day by lighting effects is nullified. It is a pity too that the talented Badger has made no attempt to match the verbal poetry with some visual stage poetry.

The progression does not list the many roles played by each member of the cast, which is a pity. And, personally, I would have preferred an interval rather than the 100 minutes and 20 seconds.

barter I mentioned being on my mind about this production. Did I enjoy it then? As a matter of fact I did. But not for the reason I ought to have, relishing the poetry of Dylan Thomas. It was because of the constant suspense, not surprising twists being brought out of the hat by Mick Foster.

One resounding success

ADVENTURES IN OPERA

DAVID GILKES

It was titled as *Adventures in Opera*, and consisted of the world premieres of three pieces of music theatre by three Australian composers, and it contained the resounding success and two stripes on the shoulders.

It was, of course, the Victoria State Opera season at the Union Theatre, Melbourne University, early in September. The resounding success was Barry Coughlan and Murray Captain's *The Apology of Sory Anderson*, being a semi-staged comic opera. I like the composer below the libertine Maria Fugit and Jack Hulbert's *The Am I American Suite*. *Seven Deadly Arts and Diseases* was a partial success in the undergraduate assembly room party, and Peter Scott Thorpe and Barbara Blackman's *Classmate Days* was a virtually unambiguously武功 monologue with no more than the odd token generalisation in the general direction of theatre.

The evening overall, of course, added up to a thoroughly mixed bag. First, with *Alfredo* Frasse, the pure music, then, with *Sony Anderson*, the only specimen of true music theatre, then, with *Joe*, a series of loosely connected sketches with music that struck me as wholly indifferent to the meaning of the music.

Two-thirds of the programme was directed by Jon Murphy, whose down-
background clearly manifested itself at
every turn indeed, it would almost be fair
to say that his direction was no chance
graphic to subtract the ear by distorting
the eye, that it would be charitable to make
too much of that, for of course music
theory is and ought to be the contempor-
ary, often, composite art form,
embracing all of the arts in the same way
as creative parent grand opera was
supposed to do though traditional opera
doesn't go on for so much blurring of the
lines of demarcation between them.

That Sampling was less successful in bringing *Eliza Fraser* to life than *Angus Macduffie* can be shared home directly to the debilities of the piece itself. It is a monologue, and as well nigh impossible to build much from drama into a monologue of such modest proportions, accompanied only by piano and soloistic. Minge Corp was a loss. Eliza who made a good deal of the material she had to work with, but one was still left wondering at the end just exactly what had been added, or indeed could have been added, by presenting the piece as many themes surface there, as a greatest concern seems.

In a way, *Bony Anderson* is almost a monologue too, but not quite, "not quite" consisting, in the context, of the addition of two other singing voices to the vocal line — a mezzo-soprano and a tenor — in counter with the bassline of the title role. Thus the tormented Bony, played superbly by the crossover soprano *Leontine* (and, as the crossover soprano, by *Leontine*), is joined by



Tom Crammer, Jim Frazee, George Pratt and Evelyn Rouse in the
Visalia State Open 1-8a

Turman, has vocal opposition and divisive counterplots. The use of an instrumental ensemble of eight, and the presence of four dancers, two of each sex, recall the visual and vocal fabric of the *can-can* previously.

What makes *Step* such an extraordinary experience, transcending either of these just mentioned, is the addition of these two other singers — remarkably characterized as that occurs by Pauline Asbjørnsen and Gerald English — and the four dancers (Doris Coward, Amanda Smith, Christopher Cole, Peter Matthesen) brilliantly choreographed by Strelakoff to produce some of the most grotesque, surreal, beautiful — but always memorable — physical vignettes I have ever seen on stage.

Intuitively and usually too, *Ben Anderson* breaks new ground for the composer; but just as I know Chayrophane's world, it is a remarkably reflexive and advanced on his *Edward John Eyre* of 1971 or thereabouts, using many of the same techniques but using them more surefootedly and varying them more in accordance with the unfolding story of Beny's personal education.

The *Apology of Roy Anderson* must rank Compton as a significant voice for the natural theatre. It and Larry Selsky's *Down* are the only two contemporary Australian pieces of musical drama I would go very far out of my way to see.

... is good but, much of the time, and occasionally it is even brilliant, but finally it provides an intellectual drug of the shoulders even while one's biceps are being trained properly and often and one's sense of appreciation of the strength involved is being stimulated by the demands there.

which the trouble is built into the very conception and the value of the work, the idea of success appearing very much above the

even deadly sins in a third of an evening's entertainment as more than a little presumption. Hence the payable need no capsules, and probably the unwise failure to capsule brilliantly enough time after time always to collect the money due him.

Some moments are brilliantly conceived and executed there; occasionally there is a flash of phosphorescent beauty. More usually, are not original in the slightest. The music is easy but unmemorable. Pruning out some of the dead wood will help to make this a better piece of music theatre, but I doubt that it could ever evolve into more than what it is now — an automatically nice, but thoroughly undergraduate, series of cabaret sketches.

Dozens of APG/ Poor Theatre Tricks

THE POOL'S' SHOE HOTEL

7-1 KOL 144202
Say Area. Short story by **Mary Elizabeth Armstrong**
Professor George from Pa now Washington Ver
Aug. 1919. **Widowed** **host**, **single** **mother**
Local, **The Outpost**, **Mo**, **Two Pagins**, **Widowed**
host.
Lorraine W. Stevens (Birth Mary Ann) **Eliza Lorraine** **Armstrong**
Professor, Prof. of **Art Education**, **Albion** **1919** **1920** **1921** **1922**
Page **Widowed** **host**, **single** **mother**, **Two Pagins**

Barry Dickson's *Food Show More!* is a rather elusive one about Green Show in a show which partly much holds together under the force of some quite appropriate contrasts. Amazon but cautious.

It's set in a steady, possibly sympathetic, private land populated by actors and a collection of human dreams. There's a Frankfurt to deliver the prologue and epilogue, there's a crocodile that emerges from the stage from time to time, and one enormous life-size person in a pale, metallic suit.

Jack Black, a sour gherkin of a failed performer. And then's Gordon Tootoo. One of the first-wave performers of eddible tragicomical performances of all that was bad in the reign of Gustavus Vaughan Brooks. The list would not be complete without the sad tale of Macduff Hunt, Macduff to the stars. (A talk too preposterous to relate here). Nor should we forget Pug Gau the puritan and cook of such delicacies as corn flake, and Captain Crustula a Salvadorean suffering gladly the slings of fortune and misfortune.

Threaded through this crazy quilt are a pair of boughed Macduff Hunt's brother, Boris and Macduff who, with a great deal of toots boom and boom your father, purvey a shaggy dog story or two in a laudable way.

A kind of puritan's fanatic denunciation FREAKS

JACK BURRIDGE

From *Hoopla! Freaks*, North Sydney Playhouse, Friday 10 October, 8.30pm, \$15.00. Director: Michael Chapman. Producer: Christopher Moore. Set design: Michael Chapman. Lighting: John Madigan. Sound: Roger Oakley. In: Joanne Macpherson, Neil Strain, Young, Roger Oakley, Michael Chapman, Joanne, Lamp, Harry Morgan. Photo: Michael Chapman.

Something decidedly weird is at large in Australian playwriting at the moment something difficult to put the complete finger on. Within the span of a week I have witnessed omniums of wildly disparate art: Harry Dickson's *Freaks*; Michael Gordon's *Freaks*; and Lucas Neff's *Freaks*. A solid trial indeed for the discerning reader after some horrendous or perhaps in a heterogenous world. In a phrase, those of our newer playwrights seem to be all over the place. Neff is currently in Paraguay after a stint in Mother Russia. Gordon inhabits some Australian compound of his own invention, while Dickson is

so there you have it, a collage of verbal nonsense made to work hard by some straightforward, over the top, single minded performances. I especially liked Jonathan Hardy's Crimbo-like, a most distressing stool, and he and Tony Taylor's Barn/Mauron routine where they effectively conveyed the fact they were obviously having themselves. Pug Macduff's tea lady and decay was most touching, Dick May's barn raising appropriate, Ray Baldwin's Pug Gau morose, and Bill Garner terrific.

Harry Dickson has been well enough served by the production director and cast have pulled their weight at APC/Poor Theatre: tricks out of the bag to flesh out a collage of fairly facile verbal tricks. By keeping the acting area very small, the

whole off the planet.

At a level of carpentry and craft, Neff displays the surest hand. Gordon is on the troglodyte side of *Jugglers*; then, for *Freaks* the words are hollowed. At a level of imagination and modern sensibility, only Dickson exhibits a real flair, as a highly generous, theatrical and fanatic response to the everyday whims of things. All he needs is an artifice architect. That is about all Neff has, with his lascivious annotations of Marquis and Brecht. Gordon seems only to have heard of the word in the context of snorting human excrement.

Neff, with his non-antagonistic artifice, looks to be reaching for an unguaranteed machine, and fails it in that epicure of the composition and association, Sydney. Dickson warmly takes the prescribed and attempts to transform Australia into a bad party boarding house of shot convulsions, mad aspersion and laid down. Gordon merely coddles us with the foreman-like chit of the sub-paragraph. The Dickson is surely the best achievement, and furthermore, he is within a top form blithely come, reverberating with echoes, fresh echoes, of Sterne, Dada and the Grotto.

Oppressive atmosphere of the hotel is created fairly easily and the dreams rituals and bizarre mutations happen naturally. But underneath the production the writing is a laudily thin, not funny enough in certain shells, and not sharp enough to make any point about the characters. Bad puns and circumlocutions and Goonspeak do not establish a link with visual imagination. Comedy is more serious than that. Whoring words, or what Harry Dickson needs, I think, is to let himself go more completely, to emerge from the confining world of classical at play (theatre about theatre is pretty boring) and had an environment where the tact of language is not imposed on a "heterodox" world.

The expected common factor in these three would of course be Australia. Neff, as it is by now obvious, ignores it, not in order to create a Half World and No-Where as in *Freaks*, but simply to dismember himself on another plane, something immediately relating to our universal addictions and cultural origins. Dickson disappears up into the clouds above Australia, his own comic宇宙 (Cosmos) threats Australia's potentially lucid underbelly and great unbrotherly unto our lives.

At the risk of being prescriptive, one possible common factor is a desire to take leave of Australia: dramatically (the discursive in the expansive organisations of *Group House*, *A Handful of Friends* and *Malakossa Body*), to gain some much expansive and objective distance from the sub-culture, a drift in sharp contrast (not necessarily superior) to the clean-up concerns of the like names and early seventies. Neff achieves this by walking across the water, Dickson by proudly taking leave of his series, Gordon by visiting another Australia, an island of predatory open and critique mammals.

Here is *Graham on Freaks*. What matters to me most about *Freaks* is its



Roger Oakley and John Wood in *Hoopla! Freaks*

Photo: David Parker

political context, and in that respect *Freud* is no distortion at all. The direct political equivalents of the actions of the play are with us already, and there are more to come. Watch for Spader at the next elections!

It is unconvincing that *Fronts* is some form of an allegory for the contemporary political situation in Australia where this statement is a pretty unconvincing even with it. A more serious difficulty with the text is required to see the soft countercultural middle-class base of the play's action as Parliament or the Poms, and figures, a fascist working-class like Trudy, as a metaphor for our present representatives. If the play had irony, humour, and a few comprehensible parallels amongst its class characters, such a construction might reasonably be feasible. For all that one might applaud the work, the author has not convinced us that it is an *art*.

Freke is actually one of those quasi-anthropological and crypto-ethnological plays that takes, from some kind of palpable, a visible form of human nature, a more

frequently but not always enclosed by battery. In a shoddily manipulative fashion, it encloses the theme of the animal versus the human, the forbidding versus the enclosed, the patient versus the tribe, the aggressive versus the timorous, and in doing so *Freud's overgeneralities and compartments lie beyond average credibility*.

The victory of the Anti-Mbo Spider over the spinster scorpions of the house is in the end purely didactic and makes us all averted escapist; see what Southern forces will our hand find apophysis we are no authority regardless of its nature, how we finally worship and indulge such bestiality despite our reached concern, why don't we, a clutch of weak over-civilized bastards, go primitive? why don't we conquer and become like the magnanimous Spider?

In the end it is rather like having an axe buried between the eyeballs or vulva and being screamed at for not doing something about the antenna. The antenna synapses upon *Classmate*, and we are finally back at

touch the railhead here all his money, a set of weekly paybooks.

Freud is morally vulgar, a kind of partitioned humanism, with all the partition's ambiguous feelings for the partial and corrupt. It presents a world entirely without relevance, the only possible interests coming from his audience, some of whom bowed at the end of the opening night of the performance.

I don't wish to say much about the production, except that the director and cast were posed a near impossible task. Once again a grit down to poor choice of play, something that seems to do. Hospital a little. Perhaps, given the broad demand, the Australian dramatic conserves is being spared too much. A grim sentence, but it is my observation that with increasing acceptance of Australian plays over the last few years there has not been a proportionate increase in dramaturgical accomplishment, particularly among the newer writers, who should be applying a lot of gung to the range of their ageing

Theatre/NSW



John Moore at Oracle. Photo: Bruce Gold

Plays to its sophisticated style

BRAZIL

WORSHI PAGE
Odeon dominated by Matthew Davies and John I. Baldwin
from Stage Right (a record), U.C. Wilkeson Productions Ltd and
Madrid Stage International by Lucy the Witch's (a record), Tivoli
Palace, NSW, presented 21 August 1970. Directed Robert
Menzelius, Design, Robert Berry
Lap Island, Light Show with W.H. Ammons, Lighting
Ingenier, Barry, Stage Management, Dr. Howard
Rosenbaum, Technical, Paul Drury, Stage Hands, S. H.
Bordoli, Scenery, Scenic, Instruments, Musician, Stage
Costume, Conductor, John Walker.

Vampires have been used to mirror the unconscious fears of generations, to write large morbidity that at times reflects the mass consciousness, and to unleash in a thrilling metaphor the male dominance of the female. They are quintessentially Victorian, an increasingly minor male rite sipping the blood of the sexual class. It needs no Freud to see the punctured neck and blood letting as sexual symbols.

But our age is not so much one of improved neutrality, mechanistic and bleak science rules as one of however born out of economic dilemmas. The last generation will not go down as an era when issues were raised, fights fought and people took their cause to the streets, but one of apathy and inaction. The exception is not of the space-shaking thriller or drama masters, but rather the

surface hard, but of the fantastical, the artfully fascinating and the funny styles.

What *Star Wars* was to the visual, *Gremlins* is to the stage. The clowns ought to promote an appetite for such a streetwise, a delicious blend hard to connect just yet, yet only are putting my appetite earlier.

The whole production then, is significantly not as much characterised by play and thrills, nor even the emergence of a new matinee idol but by art and esthetics — by the surface dressing. They are the work of Edward Garry, an eccentric with a cult following and a style which says any subject of film becomes satiric. In *Gremlins* he is churl-like not bantering, no form as two dispensational nut jobs, no colour or consciousness (for the laziest stop at red in each frame) not the spectrum of nature. It is "without desirables" and Garry himself — of course, it could never enhance such felicitous degeneracy. "It is a master", said Garry — but as it is only tantalisingly pretentious.

The lolly-buzzy upstages with huge toons, French windows (one enormous and two figures) gargoyle, the become's boudoir dressed out in batikish wallpaper, assigned bed and breakfasts where rooms flow high by white hinged chevrons, and Garry's visit with bags crumpling couch and reducing star cars, staged applause from the audience, but evaded by flesh and blood assets.

What *Gremlins* seemed to be trying to find and what the nearly year old play acted by replacing the characters to two dimensions, was a style in its direction, or more aptly choreography, to set the art. He almost succeeded, and so far as he did, put the play on a plane as much divorced from an earlier (butting) forces as it did from any simple category such as thriller, romance, spoof or its original prime, melodrama.

The victim virgin, Lucy (Leigh Bowery) is, then, not so much the adolescent whose parodic yearnings are unleashed, but a become lost in immature human. The noble nature of Tom Sankins is not so much the visualist force for good as a mock human partner. Max Bruch cuts a remarkable figure as the knowing lounge professor but in fact more bow far to play the deeper than sexual students of the vampire hunter. The father (David Raksin) is a weary gastronomist in his shadowing-Thames part despite retching a tomato asylum and George Spaventa is the amuck on the loose — the bats are! just as his daddy — as in frantic as the flies he eats for supper.

And then the dashing Count of John Warren here more a lonely bear (fewer than the movie predator immortalised by Brian Lagoon). John Warren has dropped his notes several registers and adopted a maiming mienlessness that makes the art grumpy. Taped well, he'd be hard for someone smoke effects but his extraction and stage traps effect has metamorphosed into Bala. A man towering, figure, square cut face and flashing dangerous teeth make him spectral star material.

It all adds up to a gleams concerning but a production that though not without humour, plays up to its

uninhibited style. Music Hall audience response quickly subsided, laughs were short, raucous, indeed, the spectators seemed a touch repelled by an uncharming fantasy. That, the present need for escapism, and the dress of the opening night audience might just be enough to give the production a much cut following.

A tolerably funny evening THE REMOVALISTS

GREG DURRAN

The Removalists by David Williamson. After Company. Today 8.30, Sunday 11 August PTC Theatre. Presented by Michael, Eight Day Anniversary Stage Manager. **Reviewed**

By Tim Storrier. John Shrapnel Company. **Music Room**. **Reviewed** by Michael, Eight Day Anniversary Stage Manager. **Reviewed** by Stephen Keast.

"I have never made an arrest in all my twenty three years at the force," Ross, declares Sergeant Simmonds to his rocky Constable. Difficult to credit, you might think, as ten constables, and especially with a walkie like Uncle Dan. First complaint received in *The Removalists* is merely a domestic scuffle, which police normally don't touch. But the Sergeant is telling the constable with "We could take him in for questioning".

Simmonds also tells his junior "If you ever get into a situation that you can't handle without making an arrest, then you may as well get out, too." But when Simmonds and Ross get a call on the wife, Fiona, to help her "move over" some furniture from her husband's control, and find Kenny, the step-happy spouse, unexpectedly at home, no sooner have the officers made the living room than Ross is told to "handcuff the bastard".

The Sergeant seems to be slurring on that an bare, dramatically speaking anyway, of setting his crew to the wind because, in front of Fiona and her sister, Kate, he announces a charge — "Resisting arrest and two separate charges of assault". A bit later he tells Ross to book Kenny for "assisting arrest" and using "abusive language", thus he will the darn constable twice again in book, and the TBC series in a handshake. Then Simmonds says they'll book Ross for receiving "soiled" brief glasses found in a liquor cabinet. A bit of time later (they's credit) and we have "I could get you for assaulting an officer of the law". Finally there's "Thank you" if only I didn't change you". What I want to know is — if Simmonds is not going to make an arrest, why does he go on and on with his threats? If this is "a situation the const handle without making an arrest" is that really the way to handle it?

Presumably David Williamson is talking as that Simmonds never arrests anybody, he just books them up. He tells Kenny "I haven't left a house in twenty three years". May be but is repeatedly detained everything in *The Removalists* seems to stop up again and again. Seizes the poor girl in front of Kate, Fiona and the removalist himself. Who needs becomes when you've got witnesses? (And anyway

he does leave houses — on page 38 of the Currency Edition, not to mention a most pathosomical of the play "he goes berserk" and has Kenny about the face "That I show up for sure" says the broken, broken. We in the audience might only add — *Amen!*

Simmonds is almost totally unpleasable in terms of character. He only exists in the sense as violence as the printed text, not as the stage except may be as a comic type. He's an idiot, not a dramatic creation, because he simply doesn't add up. Nor does Ross, a slightly dim-witted naive, vaguely idealistic, young cop who tells Simmonds "I think we have to be prepared for change in this day and age. I think our society should be receptive to new ideas and new ways of doing things..." Ross, it appears, is ambivalent mainly about money. He wants to go to a dance with his girl friend but is aghast in for the invasion of Peter's house, and when suddenly loses control and beats Kenny to death. Unbelievably! Not to mention that Simmonds, who threatens that he was too late to stop a previous removal striking some alleged rapists in a manner which is pacifying compared to what Ross does, doesn't intervene to stop Ross.

Kate is the same upper-middle-class-dad's wife, sister of Fiona, is a reasonable enough catalyst to trigger off Fiona's enmity to the cops and a lot of sexual tension all round. At the Actors Company John Kirby makes this more or less satisfactory part more tolerable than it has been in the past (at least in his experience of the Harry Miller production and the novel). Kerrie Adams plays Fiona better (I think) than Jackie Weaver did, suggesting a certain background, a fairly comfortable one, that she may share in common with her sister. And her court-mating is excellent. (Fiona's "She said" responding to Kate's "Anyways would think I was a nymphomaniac" is the funniest line of the evening).

Fiona is somewhat presented as sympathetic, and not without a quirk wh. So nothing prepares us for the scene in which the now Kenny continuously beats up and does nothing about it. Then the datum vaguely at first and when Kenny asks her to tell Simmonds to let him go the points out to the cops she's not unwilling to press charges. What when Kenny tells her "We're going to beat the shit out of me, Peter" she allows herself to be laid aside by her police, whose own response to this, after all the punching that's already gone on, is "Don't be so impulsive".

Nothing quite prepares us for this next, the culminating. I think, we're probably expected to despise Fiona and her sexual cover as much as Ross's girl friend offstage, down at the other end of the social scale. ... we're on the same table as the general manager. ... Marilyn the girlfriend's getting her hair set and I've paid a deposit on the tables." The removalist himself is just as unfeeling as Ken and Fiona, he's totally disinterested in Kenny's plight. His obsession is the compensation, his signature tree the truck, waiting outside. If it got one thousand dollars worth of machinery broken over and from. "When this job's done he won't

help the hapless victim and he walks out. At the Actors' Co Stephen Baker, refreshingly showing glee, is Romeo, cocky and quite funny.

Apart from the "flesh and blood" characters, there's another, non-human participant in the play — the police station where in all starts. Sergeant Ross tells Ross "It's not one of the 'right places' — 'no pay offs here boy, a few photos but no pay-offs'". If that's so, and we must presumably take what he says at face value, how come Sergeant Ross can arrange his company for Romeo as a pay off for being beaten up (Romeo: "What? You have a blind eye and you go paid off in hand? Seriously? The girls are grateful to us because I rather than you value us the most"). What sort of a police station is of such a size that it's too small to handle anything — big or small (the latter is hard to be hardly worth the effort). As when police stations do the police do nothing but bark people up, watch the mighty move and cost penalties?

The *Rehearsal* is a good instance in Australian drama of the critics and public taking the will for the deed. If it's a play you can write away around, French, Catholic and Henry Miller at their peak in *The Curlew* edition interestingly refer to results coming up. But that's not what this play becomes finally about, quite the contrary. Therefore doesn't dispense the necessity of writing a good play and creating some characters? For a playwright the mere indication of themes (and a bare fly dialogue) is inadequate, good intentions are not enough.

Ian Turner (another artist) points out that Australian culture is predominantly anti-women and that (presumably having regard to Sammons's designs on the ladies) and his personal bias against Ross (in repeated) "the deep repressions and frustrations expressed by Sergeant Ross [are] his outburst against Kate and Fiona are evidence of this culture". True no doubt — it's the best part of the play — but, surrounded as it is by intransigencies and incompatibilities in other areas, this good dramatic notion hardly makes the effort it should.

The Actors' Co performance apparently took a while to settle in, but by the time I got there, it was operating, rather surprisingly as a comedy. Perhaps because the violence is not as efficient as previously in John Bell's production it was horrendous and horrific. But I did, that must be taken as a compliment, perhaps because David Kersten makes Ross more personable than most. May Anderson is good as Romeo, but no Martin Harris. But mainly it's because of John Barnett as Sammons. Mr Barnett forces his irresistible size and deadpan comic timing almost to the end of the play, including the Sergeant's accessibility of Ross's suggestion that they make the death look like suicide ("Do you think anyone commits suicide by beating himself to death? Get all depressed and start swinging, apparently at himself?").

Whatever the reason the toll on that outcome is required, the play is softened. It makes a reasonably funny evening because we don't have to believe in it and because (David Williamson as a master not only at

reproducing the banality of officialese but at giving colour, challenge in general. His saying reflected on the possibility of "You, like your father's a carpenter, he'd be pretty结实"?

Multitude of strong after images

LAMB OF GOD

ANTHONY PARKER

Cast: John Gammie, Dennis Rasmussen, Rosalie Turner, Dolly Rose, David Hayes, Lynette Dugay, Kim Hopkins, Michael Smith, Michael McMillan, Michael Smith, Ross Paterson, Lynne Vaughan, Patricia Heaton. Director: Michael Smith. Produced by Michael Smith.

The ensemble's *Lamb of God* adapts Elizabeth Luard's far wiser John Synge's, the very talented actor Michael Smith and director Hayes Gordon. This almost judicious blending of youth, Gammie, Smith and maturity (Kordaloff offers to Synge's Synge) one of the best locally written-and-directed pieces of theatre for 1979.

Attention turns first to twenty-five year old dramaturg John Synge. *Lamb of God* is his most serious work to date and it rewards his very considerable potential as a future writer for theatre. *Lamb of God* is more fulsome exploitation of the world of Sydney suburban Collieburn, rooted within the observed web of family and the fate 'writers' develops on the 1977 national Census' Report, one of three plays in Richard Wherrett's excellent National Datasource programme. *Young Human* (both works tread a cautious path between liberating self-awareness and mandolin self-sabotage) with inevitable twitches of pedantry. Synge manages in both plays to triumph with an almost surgical rendering of powerful unspoken writers' understandings not articulated by his protagonists (mainly family and his own self-reckoning with a singular fail against the head thwarts of family, friends and religion). If the stuff of his plays happens in mainly personal worlds it ends in a reasonably familiar milieu of suburban malaise.

At this stage of his development Synge has a rare quality in how the operator is at a multitude of strong after images, particularly in *Lamb of God* with its episodic form and lengthy blackouts between scenes. But clever suspension reveals flaws beneath these images. There is a fundamental weakness in his grasp of language, a lack of dexterity that sometimes limits the clarity of the ideas being exposed and explored. That was especially true of the relationship between parents Ruth and Jack (Patricia Jones and Martin Vaughan) and parents and son (Michael Smith, Jack), the latter, who has "always done the right thing" by his family, a thin tortured with remorse for his never attained freedom, whose spirit says beneath the pain of his failing right leg and an earlier TB some like blearily enough pleasant recent cannot hold a person full of the bitterness of life, whose palliative is the

Club, memories that border more on fantasy than substance, and who lives uneventfully apart from his wife, Ruth, at all Catholic Ruth, the martyred, strong-willed mother whose blind faith in God provides her resilience to life's injustices and floppiness, her closed mind finding off an aching ambivalence of deep but seldom verbalised emotions ("Do you really love me, Jack?", "Don't leave it me like that. But it's a young bull between her complacent certainties in God's creation and her human weaknesses.

Synge's' inability to focus these tensions naturally in the compelling dialogue suggests, as I understand it at least, a need to prune the work. The dialogue has all the necessary verisimilitude but lacks ability to clarify. Yet amazingly the first two scenes of the second act (the first a blithe climate argument between Ruth and Jack the second a probably painful discussion of mother and son) manage to reduce any latent encroachment and emerge as powerful and moving testaments to the distorted emotions that burst out of suburban wilderness. These scenes highlight Hayes Gordon's masterly direction of the second act as undoubtedly points the major issues. Martin Vaughan and Patricia Jones had a wobbly start to the play — Jones seemed confused at moments and Vaughan ramified for a time before he hit home — but this suggests to me more that Synge had not fully fleshed the parents than any inherent flaws in the acting and direction.

The focus on only four characters give the play an economy yet it is a tribute to Synge that he managed to create a whole world of characters outside of the gloomy, heavy, well evoked by Brian Ticker's sparse and aptly depressing set. The authoritarian and emotional ignorance of Catholics (Bro. Thomas) juxtaposed to the pathetically docile human teacher (Bro. John) whose benevolent message towards Jim cannot be disguised by his specious muddle of educational theology and Wagnerian psychology, the base point of Jim's attraction to him. That sadly highlights the alienation of the writer in a world of compartmentalised dross and we are not surprised to learn of Bro. John's "recent breakdown".

On stage the image of poor group is represented in the figure of Mick (Nick Heaton) the colossus, good friend who is suspicious of Jim and reacts with a blunted hostility to Jim's innocent plea that he is a "good" boy (just as Mick's crude masculinity — even to the point of getting him to set a trap, a task he cannot manage himself — but he must inevitably disgust Mick because the latter has no access to the world Jim seeks). I thought Synge captured the Jim-Mick relationship well and many of the play's better moments were shared by Michael Smith and Nick Heaton. Their relationship highlighted Jim's sensitive awareness, his suppressed tactile physicality which eventually leads him a "pounder" for which he is bullied and his started by classmates while Nick looks on.

Another small, off-stage, is that of dead Uncle Bill who seems to represent "loss", and still does to Jim's father, Jack



Michael Smith and Nick Heideman at John Hackett's new Australian drama *Land of the Coot* directed by Hayes Gaskins which opened at Ensemble Theatre on August 10th.

But we had that Bill was an alcoholic and we are convinced that Jim will not pursue this dangerous path though Suzanne gets an exciting opportunity when Jim develops a "bad back" after the perforating surgery project, a throwback to his Uncle Jim's bad back, but a excuse for avoiding more responsibility on Bill. Equally, we

Physical contrast at the heart

METAMORPHOSIS

WATER PLANTS

Memorandum to Friend Rights adopted by House Select Committee on Energy Policy, House of Representatives, 110th Congress, January 2007, Washington, DC, www.house.gov/energy/, www.house.gov/energy/energyrights.htm, www.house.gov/energy/energyrights.pdf.

The horror builds gradually in the piano piece because the director has created a vacuum of sparseness on stage to emphasize, very clearly, a few thematic points in the drama. He has also concentrated work on the physical relationships between family members, especially between father and son. The interaction may be panting toward his mother for affection. Mother is horrified. If father had lived in Vienna instead of Prague, Freud would have had a field day.

The major theme of the play is the bourgeois family itself. But Berkoff is not dissecting it in the same way he did in *East* where the family was not bourgeois; however, in the family scenes in *East* the characters were hyper-realistic, camp types. Here, in *Almanacaphobia*, there is no doubt that the aristocratic family system, with dispensing children at its helm, is being presented.

George Shevsky as the father and Ralph Cunard as the son both embody this relationship. Shevsky can look mighty and courageous on stage. His brawny physique was demonstrated especially in the

are certain that they will not go the way of the latter — he is too intelligent.

Sammons' deeply personal world is one where the choices of materialists, leverage essential strength, breaking off relationships and debating the existence of God are mistakes as signs of rebellion and a questioning for the submission of 'love, gentleness, love and life' as an affirmation against suburban wilderness. All that is already passed against the backdrop of the Vietnam War as a national expression of the beauty of suburban moderation, a point I am ready to accept but one which the play did not make good. The final scene unleashed Michael Smith's remarkable range as an actor as Jim acts out his alienation in the beauty of the Italian angel, Captain Cesario, also from another galaxy. The scene struck me as an uneasy mixture of rich comedy, dark, subversive irony and the self-indulgence of pretentious adolescence. But it lacked restraint, the humour masked more in choice than in informing self-awareness and this was similarly reflected in the overdone lighting and sound effects. The Lamb lays down any allegiance to the intensity of his convictions but he has got to find new ones. It was already necessary for John Sennett to reject the medieval closed world of suburban Catholicism, but one wonders where a young playwright of such shape and ambition will find new directions for his next work.

Myself because we were looking down on him. He controls his body on stage to the extent that he appears to be containing an uncontrollable wildness inside. Shannen was the perfect choice for the father. And in contrast to the hulking and inexact physical authority was Ralph Crammell's wayward Crammell is like a single issue, and when he trembles, he does it throughout his whole body. He mumbled like a croakbird and grizzled like a clerk.

The set is a well-built structure resembling a giant insect itself. It was totally effective, but might have been bigger, even virtually reaching out into the audience. The female seemed no taller than four or five feet.

A single red light at back can patches onto the scaffolding. The all-shades-of-grey design was part of the sparseness. In fact, all the costumes, with the exception of Lodger's saffron, were that balanced-shade grey, the true colour of photographic reality.

While the mining was precise throughout, I felt there was too much that could be battered first, a few portions of movement were done as illustrations of several parts of the text. There was too much simple retelling of the story with words when named gestures alone could have substantiated. People generally know the story. There was an overall internal quality to the piece, with linear storyline and little expansion. This is very much a view of Kafka from western Europe. Looking from the east, the gesturing almost strongly without or against a recognition and horizon amongst us. Eastern, for instance,

purposely separates the textual line from the visual. This increases the tension within the play. This is not to criticize Berkoff because he did not present it as *Kaspar* might have. It is merely to point out the linear logic underneath Berkoff's approach. His lack of an clarity, of the logic, is a characteristic of Berkoff, and this

The other thing concerns the tabemas. Just as from the mother there was quite berried peace, *sema* resce, fingers outstretched, and lay on the edge of a screen a voluntary and extremely strong tabemas place. In general, all the tabemas were lively but rather than hold them with the object of forever, the *sema*, or creating, the living space, the actors usually moved back to a relative gesture. Thus, if *sema* was the sculptural power of some substance and, *sema* again, gave the particular substance a visual quality.

The amalgamated name of the entire family coming together in embryo as aspect was another, reminiscent of the motorcycle scene at East. For once the family was together! There was great joy, too, in the scene where the family is trying to keep their son for fear of losing the lad and a girlfriend.

Naomi Lynn's music, too, played away from the conventionally worded. It was solidly composed and played, a good deal directly on the strings of the piano. This was a good background in the music playing, which had just that right tone of central European Jewish pietyfulness. It was as if every piano had heart-strings.

The story, then, is built through the acting out of everyday scenes. Berkoff succeeds at depicting this very thing, as he did in *Dream*. Finally, in *Aberration*, the sense of having an insect for a son is too much for father. What he does, to him at the end of his mind and power, father may have been a son, but he has gained a family

Excesses pared for subtle characterisation

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW

AQUATIC MOLLUSCA

The Rock's Return (1969) by Robert Thomas: Return Trekking
Lugares: Wiggis, Pista 1 (Spout stage) 2. Director: Harry
McKenna. 2. Los: Whippoorwill, Musical Director: Harry
McKenna.

Patricia Anne Balsam Murphy, Associate Professor, Inter-
West, Lincoln Intermediate Unit, Box 2000, 8th Street, Columbia,
Indiana 47234; Edith A. H. Scott, Associate Professor, Box 10,
Perry County High School, Perryville, Indiana 47040; and
Tulley Gresham, Box 1, Lake Elsinore.

precision, cost and brilliantly preserved mineral values marked. The *Rusty Horse Show* as directed by Terry O'Connell and Lee Munrover and performed by the Reshma Trucking Company is the first production of the show outside a capital city.

Audience perhaps expecting an outrageously high camp interpretation of the squeamish Frank N. Farter (relished with all O'Connell's vicious relish) of the rule by which accents were purged in favour of noble characterisation. Thus Farter presided over his managers with a

local grass presence against which the heroic actors of Magenta, Columbus, Eddie and Bill Raffi because it set the local point at least a valuable ingredient, let's face it, such a remarkably thin script.

This criticism of O'Connell's is often grotesque and non-sequitur generally successful. Certainly his Frank N. Putter was every fibre in flesh pursuit, but the character's bawling distaste of the 'if it feels good do it' philosophy was finely Management.

Where the remedacy of the show suffered — and that despite its pungent visual effects and elegant articulation of the Narrator — was in dialogue sections where audio levels were hamstrung following the clarity and voice of the musical numbers. The music in fact, performed with sparkling authority on a mixture of acoustic and electric hardware, lassoed the stage performers into a blaze of physical actionists liberating the pop of rock rhythm.

As the young couple who seek refuge at Putter's inn, Tilly Preston (lively and lyrical) and Lynne Entwistle (droll and well-conceived) miffed, flustered, titillated, Myles O'Meara displayed parodic earnestness to the hilt as Bill Raffi and Ken Miller put a range of riotous fun Eddie, doubling steadily into as the wheelchair-bound Dr Scott.

Jessie Clegg's Magenta was easily the pick of the ladies, as much for her wickedly striking presence as for her range of facets, gaiters. By comparison, Illeana Manque's Columbus seemed less certain she was almost too cool.

Rocky himself, in the person of Les Wimpsey, glowed like a Great athlete and projected everybody's notion of crinolined strength and excellence; Rob Hansen brought verbal relish to the Narrator, and Kim Hillas was an assured More Fun.

The resources under Craig MacLean's direction included John Calligan's energetic piano (Ed Foppiano piano and synthesiser, Mick Conner acoustic and electric guitars), Max Haywood (bass), Mick King (electric guitar) and Peter Marler and Wayne Pugman (percussion), ably assisted by a four-member chorus of Karrie Gross, Greg McCurdy, Julie Moore and Tracy Russell.

Little to remark on LOVERS (WINNERS & LOSERS)

ANTHONY BAX-LAT

Presented by Anne Wilson and Trevor Kell Gallery Theatre, 500 Oxford Street, Sydney. Director: Michael B. Thomas. Designer: Stephen Hargreaves. Lighting: Michael B. Thomas. Stage Manager: Michael B. Thomas. Cast: Jessie Clegg, Illeana Manque, Lynne Entwistle, Tilly Preston, Rob Hansen, Myles O'Meara, Bill Raffi, Ken Miller, Jessie Clegg, Karrie Gross, Greg McCurdy, Julie Moore, Tracy Russell. Music: Mervyn Pugman. Costumes: Kim Hillas. Set Design: Michael B. Thomas.

The Five-Sided Theatre, another of the new theatre groups in Sydney, is stamp-stanily residing at the inadmissible Birch Gallery. The group, led by young Sydney actor Stephen Hargreaves as a mixture of professionals, amateurs and those just-

platoontreferred in theatre. The group's first offering is *Brain Craft's Lovers* (no one has plausibly entitled respectively *Honesty* and *Evil*), a neat coupling of brain lassitude and strong body humour, at once cheeky and tragic with that patina that only the brain can withstand without the play themselves make for good theatre but has somewhat passed by the group's choice of *Freel* for opening. These are relaxed sketches more suited to say drama festivals (Premiere played at the Canberra Festival a couple of years ago) than in an extended season.

Wiseass is a scintillatingly written, lyric poetic piece, dealing with young love thwarted by the cool thrust of fate. It features two narrators who deliver the



Five-Sided Theatre's *Lovers*

lurid details surrounding the accidental deaths of Magpie and her whale, on stage, two actors less through the events of the afternoon preceding the lovers' initial meeting. Young actress Andrea Bellard, though not entirely at ease with her role as Magpie, captured well some of the play's lyrical power — her stylised love of Joe amalgamated with her adolescent confusion of forthcoming motherhood and adult responsibility. Yet the play failed because the necessary tension between narration and stage action, a tension designed to create a seal, dark mood as the lovers leave the stage, was entirely lacking. Instead, the world was nothing short of dead on a main auditorium stage; no attempt was made to use lighting to create mood. The whole weight of the play was entirely verbal and while one is prepared to give consideration to lack of resources, this proved to be a disaster. Geoff Usher managed to give both verbal swinginess and accurately modulated tones to his narration that contrasted with Andrea Bellard's expressive mood, made the play bearable.

Lower by contrast is strong Irish stuff, encompassing humour and pathos as it deals with middle-age tragic by marriage and religion. I'm not to say there was little to remark on with this performance — except to give full credit to Geoff Usher. It assisted me that Usher managed a wacky and strength in his treatment of *As You*,

eliciting the necessary blend of comedy and sadness, when he was working with one of the worst casts of actors I have yet to behold. *Lones United* scarcely stopped almost at will stage movement as clompy as an end of year school production.

I am not inclined to trachist critique of new groups but there are a number of groups around Sydney whose ranks are prettily non-professional and they are worth seeing. I hope the Five-Sided Theatre will continue but I trust they will give thought to their choice of material, the quality of their acting, and the accuracy of their direction.

Lightweight diversion for the middle brow

THE KNACK

LUCY WATKINS

Reviewed by Lucy Wilson Old Tote Theatre Company, The Five-Sided Theatre Company, 500 Oxford Street, 1980. Seven days. Recommended. In open air. Directed: Tom Smart Wilson. Set: Stephen Hargreaves. Costumes: Michael B. Thomas.

Annabelle must think it's Christmas in Australia. In the space of a few weeks we'll have *The Knack* (an old pub put on at either end of the continent), *Perse by the Hole in the Wall*, and *Sydney by the Town*. The *Hole* closed its three-week birthday as a posthumous — it is the first play the theatre ever put on — but the *Tote* had no such aids. In both respects it was deserved to be, perhaps, low brow, perhaps irreverent, to revivify us at a moment, the renovations of a decade and a half ago.

Whereas in the early sixties it was still quite shocking to have a play with no real plot, a childless sense of structure has developed, and in spite of the "bee-wheeling" dialogue, the action appears very contained. The subject of the dialogue, between three young men sharing a London tenement house, is sex, and the task of getting it Tote has both in abundance, too suggestively to feature, but Colin has a chattering back and tries to pack Tote's brain on how he might become more accomplished. With the arrival of the apparently mysterious Nancy he learns through experience, rather than instruction, at least that is presumably the idea. Tote is also asked to run her up on his belt, but his moves to do so result in nearly all her turning to Colin that were it not at odds with the stated character, he might be doing it on purpose. At this distance Annabelle's nose away from the well-made play seems slight.

Geoff Doherty made an unlikely Tote, the blustering sennitons acting oddly on his comparatively light-weight personality. The heavy physicality that is essentially his back — and which contrasts so strongly with Colin's gauntlet stability — was missing as the foundation to the otherwise true seriousness of his presence. Robert Hughes' Colin was a nobly amiable idiot and Geoff Kelle's Tom nearly was a world of his own.

It is the outlook of Tom — the character least involved in the usual game-playing

— that remains the most potent image for today of the early 1980s. The first moments of the play reveal how pasting abstract motifs over the Victorian wall paper of his rented room. The new and fresh seeking to impose itself over the old and fixed, in a way that makes it obvious — while where the light falls, black, in the shadows — emphasising what is natural, James Richardson's act was happily evocative of the drug scenes that students take delight in so transforming, and of the ruined outside world of the street that Tolson is constantly fraying out into, to introduce the new-found freedom of the party shop into the public.

But whatever the cultural similarities between new generations of youth, the play's values are already those of a period piece. But it was written as a drama of freedom. It was meant as a slip in the face to those who take themselves and the world so seriously, "theatre as pure play" as Michael Kudlak explained in his original review. The games should be childlike, and children as Colin points out to Tolson, Tolson who makes his knock-downs by his harrumphing converts with it, and ends up the lone Sad, then, a fact that this play should have been yet to reveal: the *Tot's* conventional nature, where it has been erroneously treated as a lightweight diversion for the middle class. That the costumes should be so nondescript as to appear equally of either the 1920s or today implies an inability to see the changes that such a play has wrought. The success of it and its liberating innovations has at least temporarily rendered it impotent.

One of the best new Australian pieces written VISIONS

ROGER PULVER

Written by Louis Nowra. First Stage Society. Staged 17 August 1979. Director, Paul Stretton. Design, Lynette Argent. Stage, Steve Rasmussen. Michele Morgan, Michael Kudlak, David Chapman, Helen Maitland, John Hargreaves, John P. Morris, Peter Parker, John Redden, Michael Smith, Kate Fitzpatrick, Andrew Strelak, Christopher Caine, Michael Abbott, James Alexander, Shirley Jones, Tim Morgan, Andrew Johnson, John Parsons, Helen Fairman, Barbara Hartman, Sue Hartigan, Barbara, Karen, Lucy, Barbara, Barbara, Barbara, John Parsons, Roger Parsons, Geoffrey Brazeau, Gordan Murray, Peter, Peter, Peter, Peter.

I don't know the face of the Paris Theatre by the time this review appears but I also don't understand the motives of critics who opposed the theatre's choices. There has been a definite change going on in Australian theatre in the last three years. The writing of Sam Spiegel, Louis Nowra, and David Allen, to name three, is no longer that of earlier playwrights born Nowra when a new theatre sprang up and responded, with production, one of those writers as well as other earlier neo-nationalistic writers like Dorothy Hewitt and Patrick White, in a stricken for not doing the 'right plays'.

Well, a new theatre should do just

plays, and the Paris's two choices so far have been unquestionably good.

Nowra, I feel, has the sense of an eye, a story re-told in clearly defined time blocks. The characters are not only acting out the story, they are also commenting on it and trying to control it, as if it were history itself.

John Gaudet's portrayal of President Lopez was very fine. Rather than price himself up for a lot of buffoonery, he allowed his wife, played by Kate Fitzpatrick, to exhibit the strength *Water's* style in by — as he announces — the speech of his President's? And in her portrayal, Kate Fitzpatrick was brilliant as the simple beggar. The part demanded it.

I felt that the director, Sue Chapman, brought out the essential structure of the piece with great precision. Each part was spaced and evenly sharp. I heard one person complain about the lengthwise changes but this sort of thing can add to the strength of a play, as it does in the Nob theater for instance. It was in the visual elements that the direction showed its greatest power. The old president lying half dead, and all in one last fast and a naked hot in the air. One picture like this can suggest so much about the old father and what is going to happen to his country?

The Henry Rousseau backdrop was, as a word, exquisite, suggesting in a lucid way the opulence and danger of the native environment. It is a backdrop that evokes the freely clutched dresses of the wife and sisters. This is no place for the rules.

In fact, the whole play's message, of the pathetic consequences of manipulating foreign culture, comes from here. The

French wife goes on a naked ball in a country of rich leopards. The native cook fight, using men instead of animals, is an amusement, as is the way they watch from their painted site. It isn't until the end that the characters realize that these seemingly amazing confrontations involve them.

Lopez, according the early *water* American before abandoning it. He, his wife, his colors, and again speedily trapped in the swamp. This was where the staging failed to live up to the total effect. The swamp was not sufficiently soaked. Water might have been used, as it was earlier in the play, or just more mud. The president has to be disgraced more before being shot. And when he is shot, it is done in the 'like this' and 'like that'. Much to maladroitness, and out of step with the overall style of the rest.

The play finds at one of the best new Australian pieces written. It has a good deal of humour and always reminds us that we in Australia have paralleled the cultural development of an object country, Paraguay. Someone remarked to me after the play, 'Mrs. Paraguay, who knows anything about the culture of Paraguay?' But who knows anything about an other? Some of the reasons might be similar.

Finally, I would like to point out two young actors in Visions, Geoffrey Clinton and Judy Davis. They give superb small performances, using tragic little people who are called to serve hatched masters. This too is a theme of the play, that people of power cause the destruction of others without realizing that they are bound to fall victim themselves.



Kate Fitzpatrick as Madame Lopez in Paris Theatre's *Visions*.
Photo: Bruce Caine



Success lies in its
lyrical quality

TALES FROM THE VIENNA WOODS

WILSON AND HAN

As the country's economic fortunes tremble and Queensland unflinchingly submits to the dictates of a branch of the National Front, it seems not inappropriate that La Boite should choose to mount an Harvey's and recently this known study of 1980's Australia, a society slowly crumbling under inflation and burgeoning despair.

One might want to quibble with von Horváth's historicist attitude to the importance of his heroes and his homeland but the implicit political criticism was obvious enough for his plays to be banned under the Third Reich.

The production has evidently pleased a few Britishers who came expecting an evening of cheap chortle and got an evening of pathetically gloomy, a tale of depression, barren and desolate. One local critic's suspicion that it was at times "too grandiose" is at best, not without foundation. The play is a subtle, but bitterly comic, pastiche of the sanguine chortle inherent in the title, epitomized by the unapologetic and oft quoted "not-so-terrible Danzer" behind the happy-tale laude-hark destruction and desecration.

Bob Fosse's magazine production admirably encapsulates that latter-neat flavor and if his strong, stylized approach is not extended to the acting perhaps it has to give away to the potential problem of the availability of mature talent at La Route. Not that there is anything inaccurate about Peter Gotchak's poignant yet controlled portrayal of the listless Marianne, and Ken Fonda's evocation of laconic coldnessness in Alfred shows an impressive sense of poise and general grace. Both performances contain a stylized lyricism which is never quite jinxed up by the otherwise capable cast. If Bob Fosse did not himself, in words, a play dealing with "questions of the common people, their simple worries and through the eyes of the people" is not to end in a soppy amateurism, the

article of the left-side imagery needs to be kept out of the character area.

It is unfortunate also when the conflict between generations is so significant that the older roles should be in the hands of young actors, however competent. The violent confrontations between youth and age, culminating in the murder of Maurice in today's *theatre of the grandmother*, are seriously mislabeled.

The success of the production lies in its lyrical quality. Mikel is sensitively employed both to lead the episode forward and to counterpoint the human drama. Around some finely realized images, a picture by the artist, a tasteless cultural performance, a second rate novel, the action has been orchestrated with care. It paces at just a little on the short side as a result of the play's structure, but this is aggravated somewhat by awkward attempts to absent themselves on and off a set which, although striking in its pop-up picture book design, is something of a liability in practice. The action used to dominate the decor, here I find the reverse should almost be true. The paternalistic sweep of von Horvath's comedy needs the expanse of the English National Theatre, not that intimate and eccentric cluttered room.

Perhaps La Bonté have accepted, in more ways than one, to get a quiet little *à la carte* pot, but the result is rich and evocative. As Alfred's mother tells a guest, indicating the nearby, crumpling castle, 'If you climb to the top, you'll be rewarded with a magnificient view and a most delicious surprise.'

The Lucky Ones

VOLUME 18(1)

How often do you see a show which is not only exhilarating, funny and polished, but leaves you gibbering with the delightful certainty that a high point in Australian theatre has happened before your eyes? In *Cherrywood*? The QTFC has put such a rarity, and it's class work. That full length programme of comedy and satire which was assembled in a one week workshop put on by members of the QTFC under the tutelage and direction of Geoff Rush and a funny and professional crew of clowns they are. Given the work they get to do in the Company's marketing programmes, the may surprise some. The Cherrymores have got what one theatre as

desperately needs and which our actors are indeed capable of supplying, over time, ensemble work, accomplishments in physical skills, intelligence and witty use of the popular European theatrical tradition and of local imagery connecting immediately with the audience. The *bulletin* "Educa" sequence, especially the ten shots on the initial shooting gallery, will haunt me a long time. The show gives a foretaste only in a usually trap-and-gotoch search full using materials rooted both the QTIC more, the result is the authentic magic of living theater. If these audiences don't have the chance to see that, it's a crying shame — nevertheless we *Querquenadores* are the lucky ones.

Comedy drilled to perfection

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

SEARCHING FOR THE PEGASUS

The morning before Alan Ayckbourn came to talk to his drama course group at London on 1973, he had walked into the West End Theatre where *Alfred Pennyworth* was performing, and asked all before of the cast. The reason, he told us, was that the usual actors they had been used to seeing the troupe use had been up the obvious farcical elements in the play, and had turned a sharp snout on much else like a scorpion comedy.

The Birmingham Astron's Company, of the author could see their production of *Audubon's Warbler* could I fear suffer the same fate. It has a remarkably strenuous and accomplished performance, and is one of the most stylish (in a general sense) productions of the year. But it is failure to accurately follow the strong style Archibald intended. It becomes an insipid and often unconvincing farce.

Both Alfred Person, Dogmar and the later play emphasize implicitly plot elements. Aylsham's childhood is an enclosed situation worthy of Freudian, and places as the centre of this castle radiates a person in genuine anguish. And Aylsham's death is the reason for this despair which tends to make clear that he is a serious character, and not just another stereotype figure of the comic system.

Consider the example from *Just Between Ourselves*. Our home handyman, Dennis is in the garage making a present:

PANDORA'S CROSS

By Dorothy Hewett



Photo by Bruce Gau

Act II

SHE'S IN MY FEATHERS

Bronx Wings, dressed Shirt on my feathers
glitter in my pants
look how much I've given you
I'm just a great fool
I'm the vocation,
I'm the culture too
I'm the bad revolution
No-one can decide
I'm the shifty lover
with half忘記半忘
my whole heart, always
for everyone to see
How can you describe me
when you dream about
smiles from hearing paper
a flower or a cloud
Mosaic or mosaic
lovers, friend or fan
in your arms I'll forget
but you'll never know
I'm the revolution,
I'm the culture too
I'm the bad revolution,
no-one can stop
Show in my feathers,
glitter in my pants,
look how much I've given you
I'm just a great fool

The Village sits like the creature and power
shester used from Mac's note. She's a pretty
woman and elegantly dressed. She's a white
glittering full spinning her part by the function
from all the, have crossed high on the horizon
of the night, separating her make up and
disappearing borders. This is rolling to the shaped
over the hours, successfully accepting it and
Promised and stretched across the paper

Blonde (shester) We're all states of the heart in
the brutal country

Patent That's just right, but I dig the bright
lights. I was with the Quay, Taylor Square, up
the Cross, and I have seen all, all the intentions
in the cap paper, and the shifty dress make
me much money

From (shester) **Patent** and **Patent**

Blonde (shester) I was in the pen for armed
robbery and had a copper of the arts
epicenter. A course the art does never

Patent (shester) The first time I got off was
a guy I was having. It was only a dollar at that
time

Blonde (shester) Old queen never grow old
They always stay pretty

Blonde (shester) I had heard we could come out
of bright beauty, some spider the night
spins on St. James. Queen Victoria robes the
she in Hyde Park.

Patent I was work up in Cossacks when I was
younger. I looked well good then, sort of
wholehearted and all that. I made things
when I was younger. They'd say **Patent**
Wiseheart, you are good kind
From (shester) a copper in an old-time holder

Blonde (shester) a copper sort of I am used to have

the total should done first, then my hands, and
then my ear or eye. I am very sensitive. Then
I'll have all the bones of my face twisted and
twisted so it can look like **Patent**

Patent I have caused too long. I have no much

Blonde (shester) very good girls. Only the ones
who know when it is, really know where it's

Blonde (shester) This is the big time now. From. You're

only in the decorations

Patent You got a company of silence about
me hours I'll go away. But that's without

plan. Mind you I like a dash of costume

Blonde (shester) your belongings and leave that

street home. We don't want to see your love

open

Patent You can see why I don't care for guys who
are

Blonde (shester) **Patent**

Patent I like your **Blonde**. I know about tactics
Lover about number, was two steps forward one
step back. Like a slow forest

Blonde (shester) I was in **Patent**. The press
been a day and night equivalent and my welcome
home by the **ABC** was cancelled immediately. I
was followed whenever I went. The **Patent**
men didn't let you go

After men and radio to **Patent**

Blonde (shester) I was dressed, going lonely but
dreadful on that

Patent (shester) in the chair. **Patent** your love
and the death

Patent We'll see the **White** because I know
nobody much

Blonde (shester) She seems checkmated at **Patent**
By **Patent** (shester) **Patent**

Blonde (shester) **Patent** **Patent**

Patent I thought **Patent** was **Patent**

Blonde (shester) **Patent** was **Patent** **Patent** **Patent**

Patent I'm just a natural theory like the **Patent**
Blonde (shester) Why doesn't your badge in. You're
not a copper's asshole

Patent I'm **Patent** all me knowns get bigger
darling

Patent just put the sun in **Patent** and together they
say nothing about **Patent** **Patent** roll in

Patent I'm writing you **Patent** and lots of
little talk, and I am not too sentimental or
strong or somebody might just feel your real
longing by your **Patent**'s help

Patent and **Patent**

Blonde (shester) **Patent** **Patent** **Patent** **Patent**

Patent From upwards from the piano top. She is
survivor, but full of firewicks

Patent **Patent** is a chick and yes I am'
done repeat and just have a whisky. She laughs
narrowly, touching her face

Patent And **Patent** all gone in wind. **Patent** was
little Park, pick up the bats and the dead
insects in the **Patent**

Patent **Patent** the whisky. **Patent**

Patent **Patent** is hidden over the grave, straight
the bright beauty. **Patent**, this won't buy the
body a new fresh. If I'm great song again I
definitely need a refresh! Give us a hand here
Patent

Together they're single, carrying the flatbed
Patent **Patent** sun fire fire. We could go
somewhere else like the **Patent**

Patent **Patent** **Patent** **Patent** **Patent**

the attorney

With a sober head along on the table

Bronx Can you accept that if I put in you didn't
want, pointing and wild and **Patent**
like roses, graying with **Patent**

Blonde (shester) A kind of revolutionary
temper who made brilliant discoveries and
harrowing blunders. You're a poet, and a
magician and a chess. You write **Patent**. You
make love right for his vicious children

Patent I never loved her

Blonde (shester) So much the worse

Bronx I thought you were crooked with my
cousin?

Blonde (shester) I'll tell you all. I made that decision.

Bronx I guess you had the right. Did I?

It's time away.

Blonde (shester) I just or have makes lightning.

Unkindly-shoulder from the beside

Bronx really. Don't make me say for you baby
it won't work down Mac's in a house back to the
wall boys for so long

Patent comes in a silver glow at the top of

the stairs a transformed **Patent** the story on top
of the Christmas tree. **Patent** of the family
she mega steady down her silver dress glittering
like flower rocks in the light, the **Patent** low
slipped over her shoulder her legs sliding to her
soft feather sandals.

Patent (shester) **Patent**

She was transformed at the transformation and
smiles delighted in the bottom of the stairs
holding out her arms to her. She moves straight
into them and together on the silver decorated
Village before the Festival begins with solo
Mac's unkindly passed out at the table and
from outside in the **Patent** there doesn't have
time away. The **Patent** comes identity after a
ghost and the game begins to play

I'M WRAPPED IN YOU

Bronx **Blonde** using a silver necklace it's a kind
of love,

it's a kind of game

although the copper might give it
a different kind of name

It's a game for a plain players,

it's a common certain call

it's a need to follow

unwear in all

it's a game for me

and I know it's true

so much for what you do

I'm wrapped in you

Blonde There's a song about you
that I like to use

you're the black based princess,

you're the poetry

Together It's a game for two,

and I know it's true,

no matter what you do,

I'm wrapped in you

Blonde Clever looks are cushioned
sulphur laurels are hot
when you look at me close,

there's a desire

Bronx You're like some angel,

With the rainbow robes

when I look at you close

the universe exploded

Together It's a game for two,

and I know it's true,

No matter what you do,

I'm wrapped in you

Together It's a kind of love,

It's a kind of game,
although the squares might give it
a different kind of name.

It's a game for foolish lovers
It's a constant constant call
it's a hard act to follow
anything at all

It's a game for you,
and I know it's true,
no matter what you do
I'm wrapped in you
I'm wrapped in you
I'm wrapped...in you

With a *final twist* Eric and Edith come together
in the *final, fateful embrace*. They do not know
about *every other*. *Edith* appears on *her* red
kitchen at the *top of the stairs*, because they *do not even aware of her presence*. She comes *in*
and past in her hand.

Eric (surprised) *Don't think I've got much of a*
lesson left to tell

Eric (Do you remember how we played at being
mother and father and then one night in a dark
corner our fingers touched and they kept
burning)

Edith moves away from *Eric* to the *bar*, and she
does a *soft, staring at nothing*. Her shadow of *Eric*
is looking

Eric (surprised) *Knowing* *in both* *it was*
intentional

Eric (surprised) *planned them* *those* *longer days* *in*
the *left* *corner* *love*, *drunken* *regrets*, *memories*
Eric, *laughing* *in* *Charlie Parker*

Eric (shocked) *I know* *it all*

Eric (There were no great myths to live
through, we've made up our own)

Eric (but I was always afraid of you)

Eric (What's *Wishful Thinking*?)

Eric (Pondering — The watch)

Eric (Mum) *and* *you* *were* *in* *the* *garden* *and*
and *the* *hedges*, *at* *the* *Green* *Cart* *name* *and*
dragged *her* *out* *of* *the* *Carlin* *Pub* *(grin)* *I* *never*
wanted *to* *rely* *on* *the* *sky* *Eric* *not* *like* *you*

Eric (You'll never be *as* *large* *as* *you*)

Eric (Never)

Eric (What do you want of me, tell me what you
want)

Eric (Every *ghost*)

Eric (You *can't* *have* *it*, it's *impossible*)

Eric (I know but I still want to *clings* *you*)
These *eyes* *meet*, *tell* *I* *desires* *about* *you* *last*
night *You* *were* *making* *love* *to* *me* *again* *You*
wore *a* *smile* *like* *it* *needed* *you* *to* *laugh*, *silence*
intended *Then* *we* *were* *up*

Eric (After *an* *introduction* *through* *Eric* *wishes* *him*
to *the* *face* *of* *the* *state*)

Eric (Later, *Eric* *but* *we* *could* *never* *have* *been*
together *Eric* *can't* *live* *together*) *Tell* *me*
anybody *give* *me* *an* *example*

Eric (Never *to* *you*) *The* *laughing*

Eric (He *underestimated* *her* *and* *she* *decided*)

Eric (The *Shadows*)

Eric (She *wrote* *one* *novel*, *Prestigious*, *and* *he*
discovered)

Eric (I *could* *not* *lock* *the* *door* *on* *you*
silently)

Eric (I *would* *have* *locked* *it* *down*)

Eric (No, *it* *couldn't* *work*, *it* *could* *have*
been)

Eric (But I *despised* *of* *Oliver's* *cheese*, *and* *Eric*
burned *me*)

Eric (shocked) *And* *what's* *the* *use* *of* *your* *death*?
It *never* *happened* *and* *is* *never* *well*

Eric (Except when I *look* *at* *you* *sometimes*)

Eric (Remember when I *laugh*)

Eric (And all the time I *laugh* *you*, *with*
every *movement* *every* *time*, *every* *time* *Eric*)

Eric (Eric *Wishes* *you* *because* *I*)

Eric (and can't *help* *it*) *It's* *like* *laughing*

They *make* *movements* *around* *each* *other*

Eric (It's *just* *color*, *we* *could*)

Eric (surprised) *It's* *never* *your* *time*. *Come* *to* *the* *beginning* *of* *everything*

Eric (push demands) *Wishful* *about* *a* *one* *night* *stand*?

Eric (but *such* *you* *Eric*)

Eric

Eric (Are you *happy* *Eric*?)

Eric (laughing) *Happy*, *what's* *happy*?

Eric (but *you* *were* *there*?)

Eric (I *were* *the* *world*)

Eric (—*sighing*) *Is* *that* *all*? *Well*, *that* *you*
possible *to* *have* *it*?

Eric (so *impossible*)

Eric (So *what* *will* *you* *do*?)

Eric (It *isn't* *even* *possible* *to* *do* *anything*)

Eric (but *we* *do* *nothing*)

Eric (Do *nothing*)

Eric (turns *away*) *Put* *me* *on* *the* *end* *and*
lay *out* *the* *time*)

Eric, (shocked) *giggle*) *And* *here* *is* *the* *angel* *of* *time*
and *an* *angel* *of* *the* *water*. *A* *simple* *or*
strange *comes* *color* *a* *when* *have* *carry* *a*
border *with* *a* *white* *row*

Eric (surprised) *now*, *she* *brings* *to* *every* *time*
Eric *comes* *and* *wants* *for* *Eric*

Eric (surprised) *He* *is* *Death*. *A* *dog* *and* *a*
wolf *in* *the* *same* *house*. *It* *has* *a* *woman's*
problem. *Look* *behind* *there*, *a* *path* *with* *two*
towers *to* *a* *holy* *house*, *one* *lightning*
struck *over* *house* *from* *the* *sky*. *Two* *human*
heads *fall* *from* *it*

Eric (It *starts* *on* *each* *color*) *Put* *me* *on* *the*
color. *Eric* *turns* *easy* *to* *Eric* *plays* *a* *soft*
wind. *The* *lights* *begin* *to* *shut*, *the* *foremost*
rainbow-colored *begin* *to* *play*. *Eric* *turns* *easy* *to*
color. *Eric* *makes* *silence* *about* *out* *of*
the *car* *take* *her* *place* *in* *the* *passenger*. *Death* *and*
Eric *feel* *full* *about* *each* *her*. *Eric* *picks* *up* *her*
feathers *from* *the* *car* *and* *turns* *over* *Eric*. *Eric*
is *in* *Eric* *table* *drinking*. *The* *Gas* *starts*
the *opening* *chords* *of* *The* *Green* *Guernsey*
Eric *and* *Eric* *transform* *each* *giving* *Eric*
to *Eric* *high* *pitch* *between* *her* *gut* *whale*
and *disco* *radio* *radiate* *into* *the* *lights*
using *her* *feathers*

Gasps *angry* *Lost* *her* *color* *on* *a* *table*
in *a* *Yard* *in* *R* *and* *B*

Eric *had* *it* *she* *had* *it*

she *should* *be* *a* *color* *less*

The *Village* *is* *on* *shaking* *and* *singing*, *as* *the*
supernatural *explosion*

She *is* *in* *a* *gown*
with *her* *platinum* *blonde* *hair*
she *is* *in* *a* *place* *she* *never* *seen*
and *she* *would* *find* *the* *face*

Eric *is* *in* *a* *gown* *she* *never* *saw*
she *is* *in* *a* *place* *she* *never* *seen*
she *is* *in* *a* *place* *she* *never* *seen*

Eric *is* *in* *a* *gown* *she* *never* *saw*
she *is* *in* *a* *place* *she* *never* *seen*
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she *is* *in* *a* *place* *she* *never* *seen*

she *is* *in* *a* *place* *she* *never* *seen*



Gerard was old enough to register her from one of Gerard's speeches towards the end of the play, I presume that the editor is drawing a parallel between them in their disappointment that love is synonymous with losing. Both, though in different ways, have experienced loving, but experienced love to be more significant and will not make do. Mrs. Deneck destroys herself, crippled by loveless longing into repeated pregnancies. Gerard, maimed emotionally by his only contact with another having been long ago in childhood, and apparently having experienced no emotional breakdown, has no hope of meaningful contact in the future.

A play difficult movement, grasping or letting, is becoming very easy. When, as indicated, in any words of ought to be straightforward to perform. The atom Gold uses, although unusual, is only easy when the players can say such things without embarrassment — when they can say and mean the words as if they are their own. Speech as general was usually clear, so that hearing was not a problem, but, all too often, one heard words rather than ideas. It was often necessary to rephrase the phrases mentally, in order to discover their intended meaning. One action, repeatedly using the colloquial noun, "git", and it throughout as of getting quickly, rather than it being her usual expression of disappears.

Margaret Arkell, as harassed Mrs Deneuil, resisted the full dramatic potential of the role in a staged performance, moving and moving. *Querelle*, less defined in the writing than *Gretel*, was fragmented in Dennis Lee's performance: the child sequences eluding him completely, and, given up, he a style dominating cricket. Gretel rather than summer's proxy, Jimmy McNaught, capable of both, extracted Mrs Martin to one vocal level — loud — and fixed mostly one direction, so that the drama, humour and pathos in the role passed unnoticed.

Presenting this play depends on the "right" player for Gerald, but Gerald Hislop's characteristically performance only the most modest impression that Gerald found it all rather bad — and even a sense of strangeness appeared. As the anguish, which in the play, never emerged, we cared more about Jerry Durgold than Gerald.

Such a magnificent script deserved a more "thankyou" performance, and we look forward to local players getting better at handling this sort of dramatic fare.

Perth's most gifted young actresses

MARY STUART

CURRENTS

It's not often that we in Perth have the opportunity to see German drama performed. The odd lot of Bechtel perhaps, and two recent works by Peter Hacks as I recall, but little else, so Ken Campbell Dobber's production of Schiller's *Mary Stuart* at the Hayman Theatre was a first in two senses — the first Schiller we'd seen in Perth and a personal first professional production (for the WATCO) since Campbell Dobber arrived here from Sydney earlier this year to work with the WA Opera Company, though he has found time to do Racine's *Phaedra* for the University Dramatic Society on the side. Mr Campbell Dobber has a passion for European drama, both classical and romantic, it seems. His *Phaedra* whilst I did not see, has been well spoken of, and I can attest to the greatness of his *Mary Stuart*.

All the rhythmicness in the world cannot save the play itself however, which suffers badly from an excess of the "Sturm und Drang" and a probably mistakenly communicated by Schiller's determination to ground his study of Mary's last two days in a methodically balanced historicism. Many of Mary's long speechless breaks under the strain of having to be thoroughly acquainted with past masters of the same time as revelatory of the emotional power generated by the confluence of her particular strengths and weaknesses as an individual with the role of history. It is possible of course that in the original German of Schiller the language might prove adequate to the strains imposed upon it by his approach to his subject but the F.I. Lampert translation used for this study is not up to the mark.

production, while providing a worthwhile alternative to what was not in itself quite enough to fire the romantic individualism with the firework. I wonder whether the Stephen Spender text used by Quisenberry's Arts Theatre for their April production of the play might not have been a better choice. As it was we had to endure much pedestrian verbiage over the almost four hours of the WATE production along with the occasional lapse from the impishly tragic to the more evanescent. That was times indeed when the sceptical audience became almost complacent for a few moments, but then again when the

www.bing.com/search?q=what+is+Mary's+process+for+cell+in+the+block

By contrast, Mr Coughlan-Dobber was seen as fortunate in his principal male creation, As Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Chris Geversen noted his performance by a tendency to underline his actions in the most effigial role of the play, that of young Mortimer. Ruth Robinson just failed to strike the proper note of the pathologised. The split between financial solvency and loss in the motivation of Mortimer (the steward's servant and would-be liberator of Mary), the evidence weighed in favour of a conclusion between Aphrodite Pandemis and Ustica as originally presented for as the text has receded much more subtlety in the playing than Mr Robinson was able to draw from this expression. As Faust the Jester, Daugler, the arch-mangrover and Elizabeth's political mentor and Talbot the Butcher, Mike Hall, Frank Johnson, and Dennis Chantrell all deserved creditable

Overall Mr. Campbell Dobie's direction proved strong enough to elicit a good level of performance from a cast which, with the exception of the two principal actresses, obviously lacked experience. It was possible to discern the traces of a background in opera in the ensemble composition of figures on the stage. Thus complemented his rhythmic design for the play, which managed sparseness. The motif of Death as Justice, a decision based on a synthesis of maladjusting and giving down on the world of the play was a quite proper and potent element in a design which expressed the dark and inauspicious. Initially Schiller saw in pursuing Mary Stuart what she had her focus on the block at Fotheringay. One only wishes he had not insisted upon it quite so much, and for so long. His plan to have had the opportunity of seeing it but, and then despite the various of the production, I could not gladly endorse it again.

We're only as good as the attractions we present.....

The Townsville Civic Theatre 1978 program includes..Brian May and the Melbourne Showband", "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf", (Adelaide Festival) Judy Bailey/Dutch Tikkers", "La Sylphide" (Old Ballet), "Slightly Jewish and Madly Gay", Andy Stewart (Stadiums Limited), Queensland Symphony Orchestra (ABC), "In Praise of Love" (Twelfth Night) "The Thoughts of Chairman Ait" (QAC), "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (Rudas), Long Island Youth Orchestra", Mike McClellan (QAC), "The Christian Brothers" (Normrod) Rolf Harris (ATA), Johnnie Ray*, Dick Emery (Videotex), Hans Richter Hause (QAC)*, "Sleuth" (QTC)

*Entrepreneurial participation by Townsville City Council

We are now booking for 1979

Note: Two capacities available: Standard 1006 seats. Divider曲面 and moveable proscenium converts theatre to 382 "intimate" capacity

For further information contact:

John L. Lamb, Director, Townsville Civic Theatre,
Box 5181, MSO Townsville 4810. Phone 4071 22 3677



Australian Centre International Theatre Institute

153 Darling Street, Port Pirie, N S W 2611, Australia. Phone 327-1200
President: Prof. Robert Quentin. Hon. Sec: Dr. Martin Dierichs.
Editor: Cindy Baker

INDIAN MUSIC AND DANCE THEATRE

A working seminar on Music and Dance Theatre in India will be held in Bangalore from November 21st, December 1st, 1978, in co-operation with the Dance Committee and the Music Theatre Committee of the ITI. The organizer is the famous Indian choreographer Myrasala Srinivas, who is setting up the seminar in order to explore the possibility of exchanges within Music and Dance Theatre. Specialists are needed to take part in this seminar and arrangements are being examined for travel documents and hospitality. Those interested in attending should contact the editor immediately for further information.

DANCE DANCE DANCE

Preliminary plans have been made for the ITI World Congress to be held in Sofia, Bulgaria June 4th - 10th, 1979. The surprising event will be the co-operation of the Dance Committee in the organization and preparation of the International Ballet Competition to be held in Jackson, Mississippi, USA from June 11th, 19th, 1979. The two presidents of the Dance Committee will be the co-presidents of the Fair. There is a possibility of a charter flight to begin in Sofia directly after the ITI Congress ends.

various stops in Prague and Paris before it's US destination as it is to attract maximum participation.

The International Ballet Competition will be followed by the 2nd International Ballet Pedagogical Seminar which will take place in Varna, Bulgaria from July 1st - 13th, 1979. It will be conducted by Peter Chinery plus an additional teacher and two demonstrators with studio direction by Robert Jeffery, co-president of the International Dance Section of the Netherlands.

A Dance Festival will be held in Budapest from February 11th - 27th, 1979 in conjunction with a dance competition.

A Jazz Dance Seminar will be held in Poland during the summer of 1979. Robert Jeffery will be organizing this.

A Seminar entitled "Mythology in the Dance" will be held in Jerusalem, Israel from August 6th - 10th, 1979.

NEW LONDON ARTS CENTRE

Riverside Station in London's newest centre for the arts. It is housed in a converted 1930's film studio, and can offer free performance space and publicity to international theatre and dance groups, artists and musicians. The year round program includes master classes,

workshops, performances and an independent film forum. Interested companies and artists should send detailed information, including biographies, recommendations, references, reviews and programs to David Gudard, Riverside Station, City Road, Hammersmith W8 9RL, London, England, or phone 0107 741 2251

13 ITI Newsletter June 1978

THE CENTRE FOR THEATRE PRACTICE

The Centre, based in New York has set up as a meeting place for US and international theatre artists in order that all theatre people can have opportunities to gain new perspectives on their work.

The sessions will begin in October, 1978 with a sequence of three month long workshops led by the Centre's directors.

13 ITI Newsletter Aug 1978

ROUND TABLE - UNESCO

One of the events to be held under the aegis of the Office of Public Information of UNESCO, will be a Round Table on "The Moral Responsibility of the Arts and Industry for the Development of Culture Today". This will take place in Paris on the 10th and 11th March, 1979.

The purpose of The Round Table are to identify the artistic and cultural needs of both industry and the Arts and to examine the ability of each to satisfy these needs in ways that are productive and harmoniously viable for both.

People wishing to participate or who would like to suggest leading artists and universities whom they feel should take part in the Round Table should contact: Gloria Mora, The Round Table Preparatory Committee, 12 Avenue Kester, Paris 75116 France

THE STATE THEATRE AND ITS ALTERNATIVES

Colin Ballantyne

The relationship of large companies to state governments

I am going to talk of a possible movement, which I regard as revision of the major subsidised companies, to spend less and often in a new bed for altered relationships and improved status with their state governments. I can be accused of revisionism, as many argue matters of artistic importance merit attention. I can be accused of lack of status — a worship prestige for those who seem to have too much prestige already. Also I can be accused of wanting more for the big boys, who perhaps get a large share of the cultural cake money, at present — I am not talking of more money — nor taking away from small theatres.

I am stating that the major subsidised companies of most of the states would benefit by a new recognition and a closer relationship with their state government.

Nearly all of them have grown from private companies, though now profit diminishing, to the position, due to inflation, of dependence on governments — as short they can all be threatened or manipulated by withdrawal of grant. I put forward the thesis that a re-thinking of the organisational structure would clarify their status position, referring to both the government and the public, would re-state their function within the community and re-allocate responsibilities and generate internally within the organisation.

Central to all of this is that large scale drama companies throughout the world depend on financial assistance. If you would fail without subsidy, then you are vulnerable. The only answer to vulnerability of that sort is to build a very close knit structure, a relationship that no government will wish to diminish for no doing but destroy, not an external body, but its own reputation — part of itself — its own cultural prestige and heritage.

State theatre responsibilities

A State Theatre. The very name conjures up vision of the Moscow Arts Theatre, the Berlin Ensemble, the worthy, monumental, immensely dignified and slightly dull state Theatre of Germany. In Australia it would surely have to be a moderate, collage type company

The Chairman of the South Australian Theatre Company gave this address to the Theatre Forum at the National Playwrights' Conference, Canberra, 19th May. Mr Ballantyne is to retire on June 30th after a long career devoted to theatre.

of experienced actors and directors, mainly and permanently based in a good theatre; a company receiving adequate public money and a recognition from the state and expected to deliver certain state services for that money.

Let's see what every state has a right to expect for the security it would provide.

1. A classical programme of international quality.
2. An Australian play programme taking equal ranking with the classical repertoire.
3. A balance in the programme of some of the best work of modern outside Australia.

What other things could be reasonably expected?

1. A small but valid training programme for young actors, directors and playwrights, a practical, no stage, no CAE training.

2. An educational service — theatre in education, youth activities, services — whatever you like to call it, that is under the guidance of an expert in the field. A service of education through and in the theatre by a dedicated team working in the schools both in the city and country. This team needs to create its own Australian material to demonstrate to children that vitality, creativity and imagination are the beneficial characteristics of the human animal. The main company of the theatre must back this team by co-producing with

it free plays for children in the holiday periods, etc.

3. Another responsibility is to tour good theatre into the country towns — arguable, difficult and sometimes rewarding as this sometimes is, a state theatre company must play to disadvantaged areas, theoretically speaking, and must be sent to play there.

What else can the state ask for, after the provision of money and recognition and the prestige, if any, which goes with that official recognition?

It can ask that the state theatre search out and maintain close touch with large sections of the public, that is, it should educate people to recognise the function of theatre and accept it into the community cultural life. This reaching out by state theatres is done by an "available leisure" programme, theatre exhibitions, state and TV closed circuit shows etc., a very active business.

Relevance and identification with the community — a closer, more continuous relationship from childhood onwards is what it is all about.

So we come to the crunch. Is the prestige and the security and the extra functions inherent in a state theatre company in Australia worth the added risk of political interference? The ideologies of the opposing political parties in Australia can mind the strongest body — witness the ABC — it can be an embrace of death.

Your answer will be dictated by your artistic beliefs and your political affiliations and indoctrination. Some will feel that governments should keep right out of everything but the essentials of life others will believe that not only libraries, freight, post, libraries for state libraries, state museums, state educational systems, state orchestras, and that our governments should not be allowed to use governments regard the high level of theatre as an

irreducible cultural asset.

I might add, for those that fear the government embroilment that I also fear it. I also know that statutory authorities, like the ABC, with special charges written into their act, were powerless against the financial pressures of a government and that every non-profit company dependent on Australia Council money, can be pushed around. None is exempt and there is no protection that can legally be denied — except, of course, being able to do without the money.

Do I think a state theatre company essential? No, I don't. I think it's just great if a company develops that way within a state — but thank god, there are many walkable patterns. In NSW and Victoria you have complete company law systems dealing with the ways of setting up a theatre company. In South Australia we have company law and a lesser friend, incorporation. It is reasonable to welcome every known variety of association of persons producing the widest range of theatre — amateur, nationalistic, middle-of-the-road, anarchist, sociocratic, concert, patient-honest, investigate, you name it. But you never consider how impossible it is to "brand" without a "party".

I do, however, believe in my principles from which are dimensioned standards quite equal to those which you would encounter in top companies abroad. I believe in the subordination of only a few good companies below the top — I believe in this enterprise for all the rest, and throughout the entire amateur field. Monetary grants in the amateur field I have found to be destructive.

I believe in certain rules for theatres:

1. Representation on the board, of employees and subscriber members.
2. Governments to be allowed representation if they are subsidizing the company.
3. The board chairman to be responsible for that difficult balance between artistic director and general manager, and to see to it that the independence of the artistic

director is never sacrificed. This doesn't mean he's not criticised, or not held within budgetary limits, it simply means that he selects the plays and ends them at his right and responsibility. The general manager controls expenditure according to the break-up of his budget. The board chairman who fails the specific test of balancing artistic directorate and administrative control should be quickly dealt with. I maintain that while the balance is there, all board members should be and address their chairman as "your excellency", a week after he fails the test he should be proclaimed "a living national treasure", and summarily banished on stage. The name fits only with strength and for the board chairman who allows a monopoly position to occur with the artistic director and the general manager merged into one distinct person.

4. I believe that management should be a committee of management of at least three working artists, which meets once a week with the general manager, and that by consensus the company is governed by it in its day to day affairs.

If you look at the last ten years of the theatres in Australia I think you will see how much responsibility I put on the board chairman and the board make-up for the current ensure that has been charted.

Now to the South Australian Theatre Company:

We are not a state theatre company but we have many of the virtues and some of the failings of one.

1. We are the preferred tenant in a fine modern theatre in the Adelaide Festival Centre.
2. We are a statutory body with the government accepting residual financial responsibility.
3. We do have a massive theatre-on-education project under an acknowledged expert.
4. We do tour with the Arts Council each year (sometimes twice).
5. We do manage fine classical produc-

tions of a contentious kind, thank heaven. We have not yet a good or even a good enough reputation for the production of Australian plays. The past in this has been marred by bad luck and bad judgment, the future we think, is immediate and exciting.

6. We are heavily subsidized and we do not yet achieve the desired percentage of audience attendance. The most that can be said is that, in some areas, we constantly improve.

7. We admit to being guilty of having a highly talented and devoted man of the theatre, Colin George, as artistic director. Let's face it, he trained in and came from the United Kingdom. Yes, Sydney currently stands to gain should before that we get him from Adelaide University, after serving a portion of his sentence there and clutching his consecration papers in his hand.

If the next artistic director happens to be an affine Hartman and he is as good as this one, I wouldn't care a rap. The highest talent knows no boundary laws, and no nationality and requires no apology. It would be as absurd as being required to apologize for producing a programme with a classical element — I'd go to the truck rather than apologize for presenting Shakespeare.

So all I have said is that state theatres are a matter of mutual trial and perhaps advancement developing between government and theatres. If the theatre is growing that way I'm not afraid of it — I welcome it. It is a production device politically. It is no bad thing for a state to have one body able to stage large scale plays and play the role of tensor provider with all obligations, just as it is no bad thing for a state to have one full-complement symphony orchestra, able to do justice to some mighty work.

It doesn't stop you or me slipping away to blow our own trumpet or being our own, dream our particular way. If we are any good there are plenty of people who will want to listen, and maybe even a government who will want to later drop something in the hat.

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ENROLMENT 1979

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Dance Company — handed to us like a dead fish

Sharon de Caires in Dance Co's *Everyman's a Thot*. Photo: Jack Astor

The Dance Company (NSW) has announced that its proposed performances of *Poppa* in Melbourne have had to be cancelled.

It is unfortunate, for Melbourne, who have the chance of regularly seeing both the Australian Ballet and the Adelaide-based Australian Dance Theatre, would have been able to make a more qualified comparison between the three dance companies and to evaluate the different quality of the Sydney benefit group.

For the life of me I don't know why more critics cannot be allowed to see companies from interstate, it can only improve relations, educate audiences and companies alike and promote a more dynamic level of creation. Finance is difficult to arrange. I know, but private enterprise should be looked for more strongly to help out. Here, it would have the Federal Government's blessing (and that's about all it would have).

It is not sufficient for the Sydney press to enthuse about the Dance Company (NSW) when the rest of Australia has no idea of what they are. As it is when the Dance Company goes to America next year and to Europe in 1980, these audiences will have more 'bias' of the company

than audience in Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane and even Melbourne.

From what I can gather, when the Company does go overseas it will be presenting itself on the basis of *Poppa* and Murphy's new full-length, non-narrative work which will be premiered next year. Not knowing the content of the new work, *Poppa* will certainly be indicative of the company, but hardly representative. It will not show the contribution of Graeme Watson for one or the influence of Don Astor for another.

Graeme Watson, who has been around dancing and choreographing for years has not been grabbing the headlines as much as Murphy, who being the hope of Australian dance has the public eye upon him. Watson however has been quietly working away in his own two dancing with, and choreographing for, quite a number of Australian companies, the Queensland Contemporary and Modern most recently and importantly. He will now, if it is required, mount a work of the Adelaide-based Australian Dance Theatre.

Watson has derived and remastered into almost every corner of dance style there is; he was lyrical and ballistic on *Roxton*

Horror (one of his best works in my opinion), whimsical and free form in *Regale*, burlesque and problematical in *Medieval Musk* and now in his latest work for the dance company White Horse, straddles something between narrative and abstract.

One thing that always amazes me about Watson's choreography is his self-conscious analysing. Analysing the forms and laws of dance is necessary and there isn't enough of it here in Australia, but there are ways and ways of doing it. People are often amazed when I say that George Balanchine is one of the best modern dance choreographers in the world today. His basis may be classical technique (the formal basis of all but his cast of mind breaks down all the compartments, binds them, unites them and ultimately releases them so we are left with more or less a whole new dance language). Balanchine will be seen by history as probably the major spokesman of dance in that century and maybe of any century (dancer being the 20th century artist).

But Balanchine does it with his dancers. He goes into a pose with only a few hairy toes and feeds off his dancers. Graeme Watson on the other hand seems to make



Jennifer Barry, Vicki Taylor, Ross Philip in *Dance Off's* *White Witch*. Photo: Bruce Gurnee

set her place at the chessboard and then impise them as his dancers, a system which seems to me to be dead before it is born.

It is unfair of course to expect Watson is not being a Balance but that isn't my point. Balance's method of choreographing scenes seems a little to me, that's all and I wish more young choreographers would try it instead of getting themselves in problems and having their choreography to solve them, sometimes which on present evidence they rarely do. Watson's latest piece for the Dance Company, *When Women are a Man in a Crowd*.

Watson takes us his "theme," the power plays behind the tyranny of beauty, and in a specific sense the world of the personal beauty, the model. Illustrated largely on Michael Moore's book of photos and graphics of the same name, *White Shores*, sets its protagonists down in a briefly "Plebe pad" full of palm trees, glass-topped tables, snazzy chaises, you know the sort of thing.

Into this easy zone he places his ideal beauty, a boyish-faced model who lounge disconsolately around the piano in the tiled room, flitting around her are a couple of what look like leather hangars on, but (according to the ever present programme notes) in tandem with things like that are actually her (the model's) after ego prompting her like the trio of Grimes or Bates, into action with an apparently unpenetrated mind (who can do damage to her terribly "Puddo" in artful database).

The first, solipsistic, leaves, uses and abandons him after a while and goes back to her girl friends (they of the athletic-looking McMillan, it all looks and feels like a *Willowy Jones* cartoon). At the round-table conference, I'm sorry, it is not my

had trying to drown by a review out of a total lack of reaction.

The choreography, when there was of it and when it could at least be seen, was unconvincing, hampered and mangled by those high-heeled shoes, an affection that Haas has Mason had more successfully in *Twelfth Night*. And perhaps it is an indication of Peter Hall's view that appears in "both open", "translated" and "dislocated" seats within an arch of the Loft and subsequently is totally still-born. In trying to be as self-consciously demonstrative, symbolic, representational, allegorical, pastoral, tragic etc. it ends up saying nothing, doing nothing apart from boring an audience to death and achieving nothing for the reputation of its choreographer.

(By the way, in this statement there was a woman wearing a huge white apron plucked hat who trotted across the stage. She already didn't know what the man there was, neither did the audience, and I suspect, neither does George Marston).

As for the other new piece for their latest programme the Dance Company brought out a "big gun" in the person of Don Baker but he or at least his bullet, *Everyone's Friend* turned out to be a damp squib. I am getting heartily fed up with trying to read some meaning into choreographers' obscure titles and this pretentious example is almost the living end. So here it is to say that a "friend" is essentially a part of loyalty, of comradeship and frindly. So, by dint of process of elimination it would seem that Baker's latest piece of choreography was gritting it about "human relationships" (get again), about rituals of ownership and property and guarded territory and brotherhoods and the Central Board of mass.

It opens with the Representative. Pigeon
boulders comfortably on his tailcock, in
Muskogee as in a Cage you may remember (if
you can remember) the Representative
Fugue built himself a little shelter out of
what looked like great boulders. Passing by
there boulders are a big bag of Molley
frothheads, who capote, play, fight, and
generally try to be symbolic as muskogee at
Large (Im sorry for all these capitals but
the style of the work requires them). The
HP joins in with them, warbles them,
becomes poet and prophet, squabbles,
barks and chucks his tailcock, and is
ultimately defenestrated (in Muskogee as in
a Cage the HP was created). He then chooses a
little place with his bundle of Worldly
Possessions and Vanities and stakes off
(In Muskogee the HP had a little tap rootache
and then dropped off).

The choreography from start to finish was intensely boring, uninteresting and unexpressive, being basically from the strictest board school of choreography, less athletic, buffing and padding, a bit of showmanship there, some bits of "Graham Techniques" injected in there and not a single military idea anywhere.

Am I trying to say something? Yes, I wish Astor would go beyond his conventional Margaret Mead-like Strauss and let's on, look into himself for signs and feelings and clear things up with his dancers before the thing goes into performance. Then something might be communicated to us audience and not just handed to us like a dead fish. In thinking it out, Alvin's *Death* ends up speaking in dimensions. It is as long-winded, rambling and dull as a half hour at Wagner, while *White Woman* is as insincere, cold and heartless and pretentious as the clutter of no-creations at a cocktail party.



Of Ballerinas, Terpsichore and Cupid.

A profile of Ann Jenner

Ballerinas are special people, and, as Australian Ballet watchers will appreciate, a belief in the group born at the moment. It is almost as if Terpsichore has finally granted the Company's requirements, for without her expression, ballerinas do not happen. The very special quality and manner that can make a full-length ballet "live" throughout an entire evening as given to few. It cannot be made or forced. Dame Peggy van Praagh has obviously had a few words with the Goddess of the dance, an international star has been cast and together they have come up with a beauty. Her name, Ann Jenner, from the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, is simply one of the girls.

Ann is a Royal Ballet (throughbred). She began her studies in earnest at the doleful age of nine (from the Royal Ballet School at Her Majesty's Court, in London) and later at the residential branch of that famous institution, White Lodge in Richmond Park. By the age of seventeen she was in the corps de ballet and it was not long before her principal was noticed and awarded.

While still a member of the corps she began to dance solo, usually reserved for soloist or principal — the illustrious pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty*, the pas de trois from *Swan Lake* and most notably, the Neapolitan dance from the same ballet. The qualities she displayed in this last named variation are ones of her most salient ones — an absolute joy in the performance and an eagerness for her audience to share in, inimitable spirit and energy and a perverse sense of pretension. Australian audiences especially loved her for it and the Neapolitan became a showstopper for her.

Within a few years she was promoted to soloist and soon made an ideal Sophie in *Coppélia* as well as an ideal Giselle in *Giselle*. The audience was very well, for she is by no means limited to it as Sir Frederick Ashton, former Director of the Royal Ballet was quick to realize, casting her in what is widely regarded as his greatest masterpiece, *Symphonic Variations*. This plaintive ballet for six soloists, duets and Royal Ballet classical style and has never been given to any other company. To be given a place in it is the wish of the original, Fonteyn, Sibley and May is a distinct honour.

As a principal ballerina of the Company since 1970, Ann has danced Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* — the supreme test for any ballerina — partnered by the archetypal English classical, Anthony Dowell, Gaite, the



Ann Jenner. Photo: Anthony Crookman

MacMillan's *Swan of the South* and *Laurencia's* Apollo with Murray. Stevens is strong in Ashton's *Swan*, the title role in *Castlevale*, Thomas in *The Doves*, both principal roles in *Fest Alpigen*, *Aladdin*, Tuesday's and Sunday's child in *Just Dance* and the role of *Horatia* in *Delight Variations*, the beautifully evocative life of Eliza in *Elizavetta*, England, Poldini's *Lev Syatsev* and *The Firebird*, Tudor's *Midsummer*, Ariane Rubinstein's *Devor* or *La Giselle*, the role of Swan in *Coppélia* a wondrously warm and funny, *King of the Sheep*, and most recently Countess Mme Lanch in MacMillan's highly successful *3 set Lanch*, *Mayday*.

Last year her creative debut as Juliet brought forth enough good reviews from her loyal public to warrant three successive London dates to be called at the high door of Covent Garden to get her home, and the verbal laudations from the critics were just as frequent. In short she is a highly versatile and accomplished dancer and just the ticket for The Australian Ballet.

But perhaps her most popular and successful role is *Lia* in that most exhilarating and writhing comic ballet masterpiece — Ashton's *Le Flûte et la pierre* — the role in which, appropriately, she makes her debut with The Australian Ballet. At 22, Ann was the youngest ballerina ever to dance this role at Covent Garden and is, by now, unquestionably among the leading exponents of it in the world today. Indeed it could have been created especially for her, so happily does it suit her physique and sense of gentle feminine fair, and so perfectly evokes her light and quick barefoot brittleness. Last year she was the chosen ballerina for Baryshnikov's first performance in the ballet at Covent Garden.

So why, you might be asking does a leading

ballerina from one of the greatest companies in the world, deeply committed to her heritage and at the height of her popularity, confirmed by a recent public poll in *Dance and Design* magazine, which placed her third in a list of over fifty ballerinas appearing in London in 1975 decide to come and dance in Australia when she has previously had the choice of many commanding offers elsewhere and turned them all down?

Well, one could say after all that dance is an international art, and why not? One could also say that here she will go to dance more often and in a different repertoire and that is always good for a dancer. May be, but this does not really answer the question, for truth to tell, Baryshnikov has had a little help from her friends. Oleg and Anya's Airlines have turned out to be, Dame Judi, formerly a leading soloist of The Australian Ballet, and husband of The Royal Ballet, and now returned with Dame Judi to visit in Australia.

They first met upon a visitation of the Romeo and Juliet balcony parades down. They two young people arrived at the unknown art of dancing, exposed by the romance stories and surrounded by the intensely dramatic and emotionally charged music of Prokofiev as seriously as not! Indeed, those readers who have seen the film, *The Turning Point* will recall how a rehearsal of this very duet was used to show the burgeoning romance between Baryshnikov and Leslie Browne — a real case of life goes to the movies!

Ann and Dame Judi have been dancing together without success at great expense in many places around the world, most importantly with Dame Margot Fonteyn's beloved stars in England. It is a pastime they enjoy.

Imported Wagner, a vocal virtuoso and a little known Puccini



Marilyn Richardson (Eva), Norman Bailey (Alceste) and Allan Cuthbert (Iron Sledges) in the ACT's *Mastersingers*.
Photo: Bruce Cohen

Two of the new Australian Opera productions to be unveiled in Sydney during August were considerable achievements for the company, demonstrating the consistent quality of a season that has so far produced no musical disappointments and only one distinctly forgettable production — that of Bellini's *Norma* which was rescued only by the superb singing of Joan Sutherland and her two outstanding music directors, Margarete Ohlau and Heather Bann.

The first of the August premieres was the impressively austere realisation of Wagner's *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* on loan for two years from Scottish National Opera. Also imported for the occasion were the two leading men of the piece, Norman Bailey (Alceste) and Allan Cuthbert (Iron Sledges) as well as the conductor, Mark Holt, and the producer, David Foulden, but important as were the contributions of all these importers the event was nevertheless a major achievement for the Australian Opera, the extent of which became more and more apparent as an total series of eight performances rolled on.

The various Australian principals acquitted themselves admirably, by and large, though of course the requirements demanding per-

formance (like those were no imported characters or orchestra members, and it was in these departments — considerably more absent in the overall sense of a production of *The Mastersingers* than in many operas — that the greatest satisfaction of the production lay).

The orchestra proved it had the staying power and (at least mostly) the expertise to cope with Wagner's massiveness, often very complex, score. And special praise must go to the Australian Opera chorus for the way it rose to what must be regarded as its greatest professional challenge to date. Right from the opening choral scene with clarity and beauty. Equally important, the choristers sang convincingly and the organised disorder of the riot at the end of Act II was as effective in its own way as the organised restraint of the great public ceremonial that is the final scene.

All that said, one must still remark that *The Mastersingers* is one of the handful of less 19th-century operas on a grand scale which, unless you're really sure the decision to include truly major large-scale operas from the major hall of the Sydney Opera House (this is an arbitrary reservation, the opera theatre pit is too small for such works and staged spectacles must be carefully choreographed on a miniature scale).

What lacks, directly as what can only be demonstration of the decision to bypass the particular physical production (set, stock and travel) from Scottish Opera for the miniature stage of whose home in Glasgow it was originally designed. The appearance of maternal enmity in the church of Act I, and the disorder of Act II and the scene of Act III (Saxa I was phenomenal — in the opinion it was taken, as much greater is the credit due to the designer, Maria Björnen). The costumes too were marvellous, not to mention the prop, only the orchestra, makeshift grandstands and the stylised mock too stern stage in the final scene were disappointing in a score which ideally ought to give the impression of grandeur and open air and instead turned out rather claustrophobic and cramped — cut off altogether, almost, from the open air.

Bailey's Saxon lacked both vocal power and dramatic involvement on opening night, and Cuthbert's Walther was worryingly mag in the start of the premiere. But both had come good subsequently by the time I reviewed the production the end of our run. Bailey in particular was putting an infinite wealth of further dramatic detail into his Saxa, as for instance in the lovely Act III confrontation with Beckmesser while he is trying to seduce Eva.

Reinhard Myers, whose appearance in

Beckmesser was aptly described by one metropolitan critic (Roger Covell) as a cross between Napoleon and a funeral web spider, was rather excessively heroic in appearance for a part that is scarcely so hammed up it needs no hamming up at all. He was a good all-round performer that would profit from even further restraint than he exercised in the performance I saw.

Donald Staus was a marvelously nervous Papagen, Marilyn Richardson a ploring Eva though I missed her beautiful red hair and am now convinced it was necessary to superimpose a wig with long blonde strands, traditionally associated though they may be. The role of Beckmesser the baker (aged Peter van der Stock filling in for John Shaw) ultimately, and Gregory Dempsey made an excellent David — almost compensating, through vocal, tenancy, stalwartness and vocal ergonomics for the fact that he (as just about anyone else possessed of the vocal maturity to cope with the role) is not easily credible sans appendage.

The rest of the *Mastersingers* were a grotesque and usually short list of characters come to life from a vintage painting.

John Copley's new *Donizetti* to gloriously unconvincing designs by Henry Barlow and Michael Sorensen, was also a major success of consistency of less conventional nature than that of *The Mastersingers* due to the relative demands of the two pieces. Many opera houses will not deem this *Donizetti* to be an ideal one, for it chooses to emphasise the work's social and gender content over the demands of the deeper relationships between Alceste and Admetus and the intriguing third party of the piece, Admetus's father. But it certainly works within its own context, and it was an ideal vehicle for Karen Ta Kuane and will no doubt be equally ideal as a vehicle for Joan Sutherland at Melbourne next year.

I had seen Ta Kuane in three open productions before this *Traviata* — as the Countess in *Alceste* (Glyndebourne 1973), Admetus' Queen (Bacchus and Minn in *Le Siège de Corinthe* Sydney 1973), and had each time found her in dramatically unconvincing as the woe-spectacular. Her *Valeria* on the *Traviata* is possibly even more impressive (and than any of her previous performances I have seen) and it is also dramatically much more impressive. Perhaps the reason for this is partly that *Valeria* the character is more akin to *Te Kanawa* the person than those other heroines, or maybe her acting talents are expanding in scope as her career progresses. At any rate, she is stunning *Valeria* of larger than life-size proportions — particularly in the vocal

department.

Indeed, *Wolfe's* is part about an ideal vehicle to display the full range of Ti Kanawa's tenacious vocal talents from the lyrical to the dramatic, the lyrical and straight forward to the highly embellished. She never faltered in her highly professional musicianship, consistently cavorting with the sheer beauty of tone she manages to project right through her range and the full gamut of her emotions.

If there was a valid complaint about this particular *Wolfe's*, it was that it was magnificently too big in scale for the hall and her male co-performers — both of whom seemed at times to be forcing themselves beyond their vocal limits in a vain attempt to match her, or at least equal her in the volume department. This was a pity, for both Arnon Avitan and Robert Allman were extremely proficient in their roles.

The big personal success of the evening was, indeed, Austin's *Alfredo* when it did over exceed himself now and then. Always a more than creditable tenor, made look usually, the acting in the past has tended to be rather mannerising, on this occasion it was never less than adequate and quite often it was quite moving. Vocally too he is on a new personal standard for himself; his voice seemed to be larger in size, and at the same time more pleasing in quality, than I have ever heard it before.

Ajiman, always an effective singer and actor, was also very successful in the role of the wiser Giovanni even if just now and then he seemed provoked by Ti Kanawa to overreach magnificently his vocal resources.

This was not a revolutionary *Barbiere* but it was a totally pleasing one that will no doubt prove a durable addition to the ATO's current supply of stock productions of standard repertory fare.

I freely caught up with the Australian Opera's production of Saverio's *The Triumph of Music*, which was presented at the last Adelaide Festival, in February early in August. Full of visual comedy and riotously tuneful and sparkling, if internally unconvincing music, *The Triumph of Music* is short and accessible, good for the kids and the kids, and it is well thought out unpretentiously done.

Peter Cook's designs and Franco Cavarra's production make pretty nearly as much as there is to make of this short evening in the theatre. The two outstanding acting performances that night I saw the pure voice from Graeme Edge as a miraculously droll and saucy Pierrot, and Thomas Edmonds, made of the hero, and Margaret Russell as the coquettish Queen. But it would be unfair to give them too much credit, since they have the most overtly comic parts anyhow. The singing was consistently good, particularly from the dozen main roles of the piece, played by Judith Stobbs, Kathleen Moore and Patricia Whetstone.

The only strictly operatic offering of the month on the regional circuit was the production of Puccini's little known *La*

Scallop (or *Rondini* by the State Opera of South Australia, elsewhere in this issue I review the most thoroly exciting production by Victoria State Opera early in September).

Predictably, the Adelaide *Scallop* proved less of a drawcard at the box office than the standard repertoire *Madame Butterfly* the State company had presented earlier in the year, nor was it well received by the daily critics at its premiere. I saw an last performance, which may of course have differed quite considerably from the one commented on by the other reviewers, and thought it one of the more successful efforts of the company.

Apart, altogether from the individual performances, the production looked and worked a good deal better than some of the other recent efforts of the resident Adelaide team of director Adriano Black and designer John Cervenka. Cervenka's unoriginal but excellent use of the rather small performance area in Adelaide's Opera Theatre, and Black coped very well with the difficult dramatic demands of the piece, in particular the scenes where two things are going on at once which must be reconciled readily — Ruggiero's amorous in Act I, where he advances with Raumbaldo while Magda and others are involved in a Fortune telling session, the coming and going of the cast scene.

Yet there are problems with *La Rondini* that perhaps no designer or director can solve. It is a good piece, the world being romances and dramatics and philosophical contemplation, the characters philosophical and romantic rather than getting on with life. The moral, if there be one, seems to be that people should go on being what they are rather than trying to become something else the lesson between Magda the countess and Ruggiero her young romantic aristocratic lover is learned from the outset, just as are the aspirations of her maid Lucrezia to become a success on the stage. Essentially undramatic, the opera nevertheless contains some marvellous music and situations, and it seemed to me the feel of the piece was captured quite marvellously in this particular production.

Jane Brindell, always an engaging stage personality, had some vocal difficulty at the top of her range the night I saw *La Rondini* but coped and conveyed extremely well the character of Magda, the aging countess clutching at what will probably be her last chance to experience real passionate love, and desiring her keeper Raumbaldo in the process quite aware of what she is doing, probably knowing all along her liaison with Ruggiero is doomed yet clinging to him anyhow.

Robin Donald, who also was having some trouble at the top of his range on the night, was a reliable artist Ruggiero but perhaps a little too impulsive and mostly more and roughly physical to run the part. I tend to think of Ruggiero as rather more of an innocent, as much bewitched over by Magda's obvious experience and sophistication at the ways of love and society as she is by his youth and budding masculinity.

Thomas Edmonds was a fine Pierrot, sure,



Karen Ti Kanawa (Viola) and Arnon Avitan (Alfredo) in *La Bohème*
Photo: Russell Callan

comprehensible, diplomatic, practical. Carolyn Vaughan was a striking Lucrezia, superbly conveying repertoriness, severity, aggression and professional ambition early in the piece, and, later, matriline and bathosness as the return to the status of mere mother to Magda.

Angela Denning, Patsy Horsengang and Ruth Glazier provided to some a backdrop, both visually and vocally, to the main core of the action as one would hope to encounter State Opera at fortune asked to be able to field such a array of fine young female operatic talents.

And Roger Hiwell proved a credible and dignified Raumbaldo, in particular conveying the right mix of disapprobation — from anger — in Magda's behavior without ever losing personal control in the extent that he had an offer to take Magda back into credibility.

The orchestra played adequately for Miles Franklin, though far from impeccably — in particular, it lacked the swelling, full-throated song sound that this Puccini, like all other Puccini, demands from time to time.



Jane Brindell (Magda) and Thomas Edmonds (Pierrot) in State Opera's *La Rondini*
Photo: Russell Callan

Those who go under and those who survive

Kim Krupa, Sonia Post, Ian Gilmore and Serge Piancasta in *Mount to Mouth*

Mount to Mouth, which won the jury prize at the Australian Film Awards staged in Perth in August, is a model of a quality film. Made with a very small amount of money John Duigan had \$129,000 the sort of cash most people would use to make a documentary of the eating habits of the spangled drudge service. He took four people with no, or limited, acting experience, a tightly-plotted story, locations that spoke for themselves and a brilliant cameraman (Tim Commerford) and held the direction firmly in hand. Perhaps his most commendable decision was to keep the talk as sparse as possible. The young working class or any other class, are not articulate, which does not mean that some of them do not talk a lot. Without wishing to make unwarranted comparisons one could pose the "conscious actions" of the people in *PV Holden* and *Third Person*. Peter agreed those in *Mount to Mouth* and stated that the latter is an object lesson in how to do it. Duigan has his own views, but he resisted whatever temptations there were to deviate from the dialogue.

The film tells part of the story of Carrie and Joanne, Tia and Sergio — two girls on the run, two boys on the dole. The tragic characters are a laundress "landlady" who pays perfunctory attention to Carrie and sometimes enables her romantic imagination, and a chemist who could have been a beneficiary of Duigan had not kept such a grip on the character. He was played by Walter Pynn, once a customer who at the

Sydney stage. In his case, too, words were kept to a minimum. The occasional snatched clatter of the dialogue were about all he was allowed, but the flicker of rotted personality, still poking away under the saturated caustic, came through touchably.

The boys and girls meet in a greasy-spoon cafe where Carrie and Joanne have acquired a bit of temporary work and the boys come in for just as plenty of snark. They rendezvous that night in a pub to spend Tia's last \$24. Joanne drinks beer with her hands, Carrie acts for brandy cravats. She adopts a rather mannered means to be become Joanne. They spend the night in Sergio's old bumb of a car — driven from Westsaggy where there is no work either — and so borrowed back on the tail of an unsympathetic relative, and finally in the makeshift living quarters where the girls have assembled on a high floor of an abandoned tenement building. On the floor below the "dole" camp with its paper bag-wrapped bottles of liquor and tea trays.

The association tenuous at first, becomes stronger, more real, more emotionally grounded. Use of work, the girls cannot get the dole because they escaped from a corrective institution (Jo had known as a "home") and have no credentials. Application for the dole would simply mean a return to the "home". So they shoplift food and clothes. They try to spend the time applying for jobs they never

get. Acceptable-looking Tia is an unsuccessful as long-haired, shaggy Sergio. The girls then go an "escort" service, the euphemism for nights out with visiting frenzies.

The resolution of this story is very moving, as intended in the film. In any group of four there are those who will go under and those who will survive. The audience will much on own conscience.

The performances are quite stark, teetering, of such baseline, and render that despite the developed theme I never felt despaired. Carrie is played by Kim Krupa a former MDA student and Joanne played by Sonia Post, a girl who has never before acted. A young New Zealander named Ian Gilmore, whose background I don't know, is Tia, and Serge Piancasta, a truck driver by occupation, makes a strong soaring impact as Sergio.

Comer's photography is a great plus, his deep-lifting scenes, the dark interiors into which he has somehow infused warmth and the film's only concentration on youth at play, a day out on a wild winter beach, are quite memorable.

The film is being distributed by Hastings Village and in the matter of promotion they are up against it. But I hope the word will get around and make *Mount to Mouth* the success it deserves to be.

John Duigan's new film is *Breakout* from the play by Jack Hibberd, which he is making for \$380,000.

1978 Australian Film Awards

At a time when the Australian film industry is producing films and filmmakers worthy of international acclaim, it's depressing to see that industry celebrate its achievements with an event barely reminiscent of 1950s television talent shows.

The Australian Film Institute's 1978 Australian Film Awards were presented late August in Perth's 3,500-seat Bicentennial Centre, a dauntingly enormous auditorium which only George William Russell at the height of his charismatic powers has managed to fill with sufficient energy.

The Awards presentation, televised nationally and costing the house, TNN 7, a reported \$200,000, varied from ordinary boring to downright embarrassing. The lineup of ageing showbiz personalities, imposed and local, made one wonder whether the organisers had ever come across that often quoted truism that the 18 to 32 year olds are the solid core of影迷 in Australia and elsewhere.

Look at just some of the films to be honoured this year — the big laureate *Newfangled*, which bagged eight awards, *The Quest of Amicus Blackstock*, with three gongs, John Duigan's low-budget *Mount To Mouth*, awarded the Special Jury prize, Tom Haydon's *The Last Tasmanian*, the prize-winning Documentary, and Steve Reich's *The Devil's Party*, the Short Fiction category. They offer in varying degrees energy, passion, intense commitment to the craft of storytelling, committed production standards. And certainly they and their makers deserve a celebratory event which

is in style and mood matches the importance and quality of the best in Australian cinema today.

The Australian Film Commission act in Perth just before the Awards, and there were good news and bad news numbers floating around after the meeting.

The good news number suggests that the Commission will be putting a lot more money into script development. No film supervisor from Sam Goldwyn onwards has ever demonstrated inability in identifying the script that delivers the goods. The Commission, armed by consultant and assessors, has made its fair share of mistakes in backing under-written and poor plan but scripts, and money spent at the drafting and re-drafting stage could mean money saved in the end.

However, more money for script development certainly means less money for production budgets in these Federal self-righting days. The Commission presumably wins the new Tax Assessment Act (offering tax deductions to generate investment in film) by introducing a very considerable change in the funding of the Australian industry, offering producers a viable alternative to dependence on large-scale Commonwealth banking. This may explain the bad news number of an otherwise cutting applying to all feature budgets submitted for Commonwealth funding, irrespective of the scope or merit of the film.

Australian films have contributed a great deal in the last few years to the definition of the Australian identity at



The Last Tasmanian, left to right: Gruenig, Clark, Canney
photo by courtesy of Tasmanian Film Corporation

home and overseas, and the Australian Film Commission's role in this process has been an important one. With Canberra calling the financial line, the Commission, like the other statutory bodies administering the performing arts in Australia, is going to have to be tough minded and practical in its dealings with filmmakers and Federal patron alike. And it's clearly time for the Commission to look hard at itself and its self-proclaimed role as "merchant banker to the Australian film industry".

The Award-winning *Mount To Mouth* and *The Last Tasmanian* were two of the features screened at the Western Australian International Film Festival early September in Perth. The programme, drawn largely from offerings at this year's Sydney Film Festival, played to packed houses. Small matching grants from the Australian Film Commission and the Western Australian Arts Council made the very successful event possible.

Robert Page

Macbeth On Video

The 1977 SATC production of *Macbeth* has been subtitled in a major studio production by the SA Film Corporation who are making it available for educational purposes. This very competently filmed version is related close to three twenty minute segments. The three tapes are each introduced by Colin George, the director, who also provides the story notes which allow such a dramatic reduction in running time. But without a fair knowledge of the play to begin with, the plot like this is hardly adequate for students used to follow the story.

Coupled with this, and exacerbating it, is the idiosyncratic nature of George's version of the play. He has given full rein to the mark he makes that "Shakespeare's imagination can range the world" and dressed out his production accordingly. The mortal figures cast their gowns in Korovina's style and beyond that the various traditions, the king, merciful Titania, the servants appear as figures in Macbeth full black robes and at others in Indian dress, the weird sisters have masks which are from the Booth Boxes and the changing visual music channels, if memory serves me correctly, directly from the

soundtrack of the *Lord of the Flies*. All of which, for no apparent reason beyond underlining a cosmopolitan view of the Bard, serves to make sense of such lines as "From thence to instrument". Don't directors realize that the universal arises out of the particular?

Again, the deciding problem difficult for Kevin Miles goes on a mask to change before our eyes from wounded soldier to weird sister and from thence to pig-servant and one all Macbeth's hired assassins. George obviously wanted to make the point that the weird's evil influence is ubiquitous, but, given such severe abridgement, it would appear to students merely confusing. In other ways he is no better, most notably in giving the dagger of Macbeth much more of an incisive reality. Being a studio production there is of course no account taken of staging nor of the potency of the actor audience relationship in the theatre.

It is not that we want Shakespeare "straight" but that is as far out on a limb that the classroom's main use would be (as George admits) in sparking discussion about its relevance — which is rather boldy challenging or prettily accepted depending on one's point of view.

Reservations about the production itself should not be seen as criticisms of the idea



of extending audiovisual aids to the study of drama in performance, for which the SA Film Corporation deserves full praise. The package of three 16" video cassettes (which fit a Sony U-matic) is available at a very reasonable \$300, approx. Master copies, with a license for unlimited copying are also obtainable for just the price of the tape.

All inquiries to the Documentary Marketing Department, South Australian Film Corporation, PO Box 265, SA 5001

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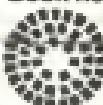
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Roland Topor *Lemniscate Has Right* (Calder Playscript 12)

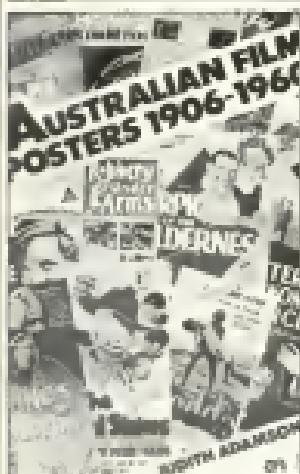
Alan Brown *Shoeshop* (Calder Playscript 14)

Howard Barker *Four Slaughter* (Calder Playscript 15)

James Kotsopoulos (ed) *Journal of Becker Studies* (Summer 1971, No 2). John Calder, in association with The Becker Archives at the University of Reading.

John Adams *Australian Film Posters 1906-1960* (1980) (Afford-Currie) \$19.95

Chris Hogget *Stage Crafts* (Adam & Charles Black)



The subject of Roland Topor's *Lemniscate Has Right* is that. And as one of David Hare's characters says, that's not a disaster, that's a fact. The play has, according to its publisher, "the disconcerting but highly enjoyable feel of a Feydeau farce re-written by Ken Russell and Lars von Trier". In the grand tradition of French farce its characters are patient for a weekend in a country house — except that the house is flooded and one of them has drowned. The gloomy head of the household, given to quoting a remark by Léonard de Vinci that "the more people leave behind them an overflowing laurel" is horrified even more when huge tufts begin to appear in unusual places around the house — on the dining table, under the sofa, etc. As well as an exercise in classic French farce the play becomes a closed room detective story as the characters try to determine who could have twenty two cards lying around in so many hours. The resolution of the problem is a capstone for much profound social satire and philosophical speculation about men's motivations.

Alan Brown's *Shoeshop* is a strange, almost

unreal numbers of sightseers, described characters and gestic, were hoovered into a household where an old man sits with a dead rat on his head quoting Eliot, a couple argue furiously with each other and a violent young man polishes and boils himself into his room, while visitors bring stories of love and beauty and a yearning for richness. Specifically there comes a strangely thin-boned girl in a white dress, named Forest — a hayseed figure but here loaded with some delicacy and humour. Her only dialogue, spoken "with a beautiful voice", is about her own questions about the world ending with a whimper, read from a strip of paper pulled out of a rotten Christmas cracker. At his request she shows the old man such the map "a beautiful tourist" that regrettably departs. The play is full of strange images surprisingly juxtaposed.

Another great play is *Four Slaughter* by Howard Barker. It is the epic story of Gorchet, a retired communist and "England's oldest living survivor". The violently energetic narrative movements comes from his early life fighting with the "Capitalist Army" in Russia after the Revolution, working in Mum's Hall during the 30s, meeting his old commanding officer in a burning whisky warehouse during the Blitz with scenes of Old Gorchet lying in hospital with a bottled hand belonging to a comrade who was killed by the White Russians. He escapes with a winter and sets off for Russia to bury the hand with the rest of his comrade's bones, but only gets as far as the South Downs where he meets his commanding officer in a house. Lear-like final encounter. The action of the play is rich, raw and brutal. A critic in the natural press recently complained that one should not have to feel guilty for hating Alan Ayckbourn — and neither I suppose one should, but in Adorno's image he is closer to Howard Barker's brandy.

All these plays are Calder Playscripts (numbers 13, 14 and 15 respectively) and all are small closely printed volumes at the same price (\$3.50) as Currency Press' much more handsome publications. It's just that the plays themselves are so much better.

Before we turn John Calder it is worth mentioning another publication, the *Journal of Becker Studies*. No 2. A few months ago I wrote about the need for more theorising in Australian drama. Now I write and am afraid, and have to point out that my remarks were addressed to practitioners and academics. The last thing in this volume is a biography of reclusive Becker's own production of *Das Dreieck und Fünfzehn* at Berlin at the end of 1919 — an interesting insight into the practical work of a great man whom many people in this country seem to regard as too 'eccentric'.

Converting the academics, even Tom Stoppard's characterisation of their work as characterising the class playing is not enough to justify them, after the longeurs with Karyev and Koschev in the Philippines.

Less specialist and of more general interest is the British journal *Winter Quarterly* which goes a mention here, after thirty issues, because it had its associated publication (playscripts, checklist on writers etc) and is now being discontinued in this country by Currency Press.

At the opposite extreme is *Australian Film Posters 1906-1960* by Judith Adams. That is a large format notebook with full colour reproductions of posters, which annotate, and a clearly text which covers all manner of subjects, rather than a description of the films themselves. The book is massive but there is not enough in it to give the ignorant any coherent history of Australian film-making, and too much for those who don't care but would like to know what the film was about. Nouvelles as they say, not what I need to be.

Finally, and most usefully, especially for schools and unrepresented amateur companies, is *Stage Crafts* by Chris Hogget. Adam and Charles Black. This is an extremely clear 'how to' book covering most aspects of conventional stage craft. It will not be of much use to the adventurous. It seems to assume that all sets will be made of timber and conventional metal prop of paper mache. It also assumes an understanding obtained by failed realistic historical props and costumes (it has over thirty pages on items and answer through the ages). Professionals people wanting a clear pastoral guide to the techniques and tricks of the trade in the theatre should find it useful.



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THEATRE 03

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TRouPE

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Rose in the Attic by Dennis Clark. Director, David Allen. To Oct 13

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Chichester Light Opera Company production of *Oliver! II*. Oct 21

Heritage Theatre, Waverley production of *My Fair Lady*. Oct 20-Nov 4

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Play in Performance (Lower primary, early childhood, primary, Agency Arts, Tourism) metropolitan and country schools

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SCAT (Singing ACTIVITY Theatre) (one afternoon drama experiences)

Swan Lake (Maurice) (story tell-a-day) (For all ages)

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING GROUP (03 947 1115)

Front Pages
Decades of the Absurd by Philip Rothwell. Director, Richard Murphy. Sep 17 to Oct 19

Rock Theatre

Rock by Jason Griffin. Director, Fay Molloy. All women cast and crew. Sep 21 to Oct 12
Light Shining in Buckinghamshire Oct 24 to Nov 19

COMEDY THEATRE (03 9493)

The Masters (Ivan Novak) 3. *Mad Cawdor* With Alan Broadbent and David Cavan. To Oct 7
The Merchant Prince of Chester, *The Bear in Chair* With Lee Gilligan. From Nov 1

FLYING TRAPZI CAFE (03 9770)

Soulseller (Ron Givens and Ray Harrel) *Phoenix* (Ron Givens and Ray Harrel)

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Original Cast, director, Bob Gosscock, with Mary Kennedy, Steve Vizard and Tony Richards

HOOPLA THEATRE FOUNDATION (03 9411)

Playbox (Downstage), *The Congregant* Director, Wal Cherry. To Oct 7
The New Greatest Playbox by Dan Scott. Director, David Kendall. From Oct 11

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (03 3211)

Asian Diversion, George and Edith Mirro. Starring Sally Ann Russell. *Wiggy Gordon*, Ed Mirro. From Oct 25

LAST LAUGH Theatre Restaurant (03 9200)

Asian Whiz Whiz, a night of hot intersects and famous. Director, John O'May. *Chocophry* Karen Johnson. Starring the Chocoholics.

LA MARIA (03 4193/3471/2083)

In conjunction with the *Barrymore Theatre Collective*. 2 plays.
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Enter H (yesterday and tomorrow) From 19 Oct to 10 Nov

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY (03 41888)

House (Sister Theatre)
Give With Kindly by David Alan Duncan, Ray Lawler. Designers, Steve Nelson, with Colleen Murray, Rod Chaffey, and Tammy Dwyer. *Antarctic Dream*

Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas. Director, Mark Ridge. Designer, Anne Finner, with John Stannard, Michael Keach, Stephen Copley, Beverley Dean, Bruce Spence, Lynne Carton, Eddie Wahl and company. To Oct 21

The Antarctic Rain of *Antarctic II* by British Poet Laureate, Brian Patten. From Oct 26

Tragedy (Production, Australian Circumlocution, Jason Alexander). Workshops of new or unproduced Australian and overseas plays. Sunday Matinees. For youth classes.

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Old Mill, (Geelong) (03 52 1444)
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Children in the Playground by Offenbach. Director, Brett Prentice, Designer, Kenneth Rowell, starring Suzanne Steele, Robert Gaud, David Gray, Ian Curran, Ronald Davel, Evelyn Kruger, Greg McFarlane, Lorraine Spain, John Wood, and Charles and Orchestra of the VSO conducted by Richard Davel. Oct 6-21
Schools program, touring. *Leaf in the Garden* (With Phoenix) 16-Sept by Nathan Ross

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Golden Hippo Show. Three week tour for Victorian Arts Council

THEATRE RIVAGE (03 63556)

Opera Company of New South Wales. *Playboy* by Colette Murphy. Oct 4-7
Young Children's Show, Oct 28-30
Australian Opera (See *Opera*) Oct 31 Nov 1, 4

For review contact the *Editorial Office* on 2695 074978

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CIVIC THEATRE RESTAURANT (02 12141)

Laughter Unlimited Director, Brian Smith

HOLE IN THE WALL (03 3605)

No More War by Hazel Town. Director, Stephen Berry. To Oct 11

NATIONAL THEATRE (02 2506)

Playhouse (Richard III by Shakespeare). Director, Stephen Barry. To Oct 14

The Hostage by Brian Friel. Director, Mike Morris. Oct 15- Nov 11

Gascoigne (King of Scotland) *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* (Richard II). Oct 14-15

Tim (Aid and Sustenance) by Richard Tukolski and

the Company director Andrew Ross
Drew the Mystery by Richard Tollock
Drama: Australian
Reviewed by Richard Tollock Director
Andrew Ross Available for booking.
THE REGAL, CINI (1971)
A Host of Tales with Hattie Jacques and Eric
Solan From 11.

For further contact Alan Andrew on 299 6679

(Continued from page 3)

resigned as president of the Society and was appointed artistic director, so that I have produced three art plays.

We had an American play festival this year starting with 'No Man's Land' from 'Summer of the Seventeenth Doll'. For the third play we advertised nationwide for a play not yet performed in Australia. We received twenty six entries, from more cities, and finally settled on 'Who The Hell Needs Wiggetts?' by Queensland's Al Steiner. It is being produced at the end of October. The Theatre uses amateur actors, but it is attracting good and appreciated audiences who have come to expect the high standard of production they are getting.

NATIONAL MOVES

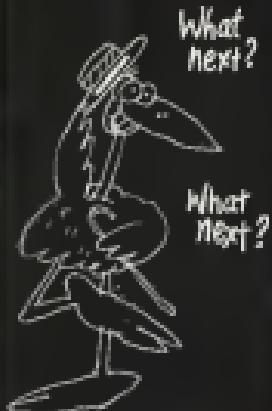
JOHN AMBROSE

In line with his policy of encouraging Australian writers, Stephen Barry, at the opening of his second season announced plans that will see considerable encouragement for new work in the near future. In Western Australia for 1979 Stephen Barry has commissioned plays by Dorothy Hewett and Alan Seymour, as part of the extensive plans here to celebrate the State's 150th year.

Following on from that Stephen Barry expects to be attracting actors and playwrights to come to develop local talent in WA. Already the Playhouse, under his direction has taken a considerable interest in new work. Australian Dennis Miles Morris has been working with a writing/acting ensemble group that has had two successful productions this year, *Timber* and *Don the Don*.

And in the Green Room Stephen Barry has chosen Christian Radtke's new play, *Arrernti* or *Fractured Framework* — a play where there is, in the programme notes say, a redefinition of the game made by women's liberation movements and a plea for the revolution to continue. And plans are well in hand for a new children's play by Richard Tollock, *The Corks of Bungaree* in Christmas production. The cork is not of the first species, but of the all time leading loss on the land when that kind of the family logic of the Shakers. Unseen, it will be across from and marvellous to have an Australian play for Australian children. There should be more of all this. And it seems that that just might happen over here.

Theatre Australia



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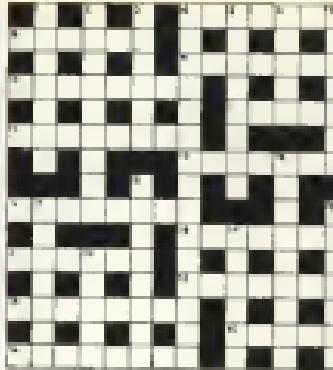
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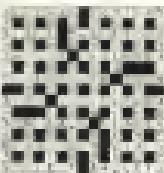
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Answer

1. (Fiction) like cocaine, may have had two (four) different answers (10)
2. Compete with a home in Las Vegas? (8)
3. What we hope 'the two houses' traffic of our stage will be (12)
4. Mother, in charge, accepts gifts and becomes equal (11)
5. Sound like a cemetery for one on base? (6)
6. Franklin's moment, family memory, (6)
7. A never so much altered place in NSW (8)
8. A mythical human team leader for a military man (11, 11)
9. Brute man in confusion for the city (10)
10. Town and then more, somehow, to put someone in (5, 6)
11. Noble word that, Lucy has become (8)
12. Make here and laugh we hear, for a bit of a stir (6)
13. Ready for cartoon up (3, 3)
14. Peter (he) can be enthusiastically pleasing (6, 6)

Down

1. The visual caged human, the person. (7) (The Prisoner?)
2. Household's desire, a blend of pleasure (sugar around) and pain (8)
3. Greek legend as an ocean name (10)
4. The under-inflated, a stage between (1, 6, 6)
5. "I'm free and private" (possibly) I think (I'm free) (10)
6. Queen's name sounding like place (5)
7. Writing — the art has been rearranged (7)
8. Quaint, exotic name in these terms (9)
9. Ballroom playright? (13, 5)
10. What Romeo can say about Juliet (7)
11. Educated journalists (suffer the bourgeoisie) (7)
12. The old Scandinavian (earns the) Nordic (He-Dame) (Elders better half) (10)
13. King leaves the Louvre in a mess for an egg (10)



The first answer entry
down on August 25th
will receive one year's
subscription to *T.A.*

Last month's answer